

# The Musical World

## AND Dramatic Observer.

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WEEKLY. PRICE 3d.

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June 3 ... Lecture.  
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July 15 ... F.C.O. Examination (Paper Work).  
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## LIST of PORTRAITS that have appeared

IN THE  
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May 4. Edward Grieg.  
May 11. Carl Rosa.  
May 18. F. H. Cowen.  
May 25. Senor Sarasate.  
June 1. Frederic Cliffe.  
June 8. Prof. Herkimer's "An Idyl."  
June 15. Fraulein Hermine Spies.  
June 22. Signorina Teresina Tna.  
June 29. Madame Marcella Sembrich.  
July 6. Madame Becker Gröndhal.  
July 13. Sir John Stainer.  
July 20. Madame Lillian Nordica.  
July 27. M. Jean de Reszke.  
Aug. 3. Charles Dibdin.  
Aug. 10. Joseph Hollman.  
Aug. 17. Madame Sarah Bernhardt.  
Aug. 24. Frau Amalie Materna.  
Aug. 31. Herr Van Dyck.  
Sept. 7. M. Johannes Wolf.  
Sept. 14. Madame Patey.  
Sept. 21. Mr. Arthur Oswald.  
Sept. 28. The Bayreuth Conductors.  
Oct. 5. Miss Rosalind F. Ellicott.  
Oct. 12. Dr. A. C. Mackenzie.  
Oct. 19. Dr. Bernhard Scholz.  
Oct. 26. Madame Patti-Nicolini.  
Nov. 2. Johannes Brahms.  
Nov. 9. Professor Villiers Stanford.  
Nov. 16. Arrigo Boito.  
Nov. 23. Mr. and Mrs. Henschel.  
Nov. 30. Miss Marianne Eisler.  
Dec. 7. Madame Trebelli.  
Dec. 14. Mr. J. H. Bonawitz.  
Dec. 21. Robert Browning.  
Dec. 28. Miss Grace Damian.  
Jan. 4. Mr. Plunket Greene.  
Jan. 11. Mr. Frederick Corder.  
Jan. 18. Madame Georgina Burns.  
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## The Musical World.

LONDON, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1890.

## FACTS AND COMMENTS.

We invite the attention of Mr. Herbert Spencer to some facts concerning the state of music in America. Mr. Herbert Spencer, it may be said for the benefit of the ignorant, is a gentleman who writes occasionally upon the scientific bases of ethics and aesthetics in a light and popular style befitting the subjects. The facts to be presently quoted may perhaps be accepted as indicating that a musical revolution, more portentous in its results than any that has yet taken place, is at hand; as indicating, moreover, that, having reached the highest artistic development possible under existing conditions, we are now upon the downward road to disintegration. For some time there have been rumours that the kingdom of the banjo was at hand, and even in enlightened England that pleasing instrument has lifted up its frequent voice. But in America, where there are no traditions of a native classic art to check the course of evolution, the banjo and the guitar are triumphant. In Boston, for instance, a concert was recently given by an orchestra of banjos, guitars, and mandolines—one hundred and fifty of them! And in Chickering Hall a concert, less terrifying only in the smaller number—one hundred—of instruments employed, took place at

which—O shade of Wagner!—the great march from "Tannhauser" was performed. With what words shall one tell of the manner in which those majestic strains of the horns and clarinets, those flowing passages for violins, were interpreted by the "twiddles, zhrips, and plunk-plunks" of the banjo? Not even could we in England regard such a performance with equanimity, if the Prince of Wales himself, who is reported to play the instrument with princely skill, led the way. Neither gods, men, nor (newspaper) columns can hear without wrath, although Americans—who, musically, seem to be none of these three—may roar their nasal applause.

But this is not all. We knew that the harp was becoming very fashionable everywhere, but we had not imagined that the fashion had spread so widely as seems now to be the case on the other side of the Atlantic. Therefore it behoves us to ask what will be the ultimate effects upon art of the revival of this class of stringed instruments. For years we have been trying to produce instruments which shall rival the voice or the violin in power of sustaining notes, and giving broad *cantabile* passages with effect. Every pianoforte maker addressed himself to this, and the sustaining pedal was set up as a milestone in the path of progress. Now, it seems, we are to change all that. The plectrum will replace the sustaining pedal, and we are to play vile things, stringed tambourines which hiss, and twangle, and buzz, but never produce a sustained note. The pianoforte will give place to the harpsichord, and ultimately, perhaps, we shall all pluck gaily at the lyric tortoiseshell and beat the festive tom-tom. Other changes too will come with this return to primitive music, and the Lloyds and Pattis of the future will sing for goats on the village green. Now they only sing for sheep. Surely here is food for Mr. Spencer's reflective mind? But we see at least one blessing which will accrue to an overworked profession from this reversion to artistic barbarism—there will be no Pianoforte Recitals!

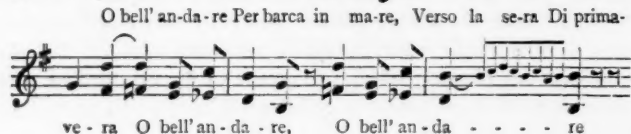
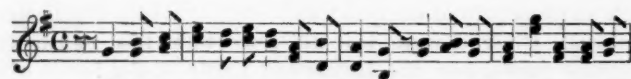
It will be remembered that a few days ago Dr. Hubert Parry went down to Birmingham to lecture to the inhabitants of that Elysian city on Early English Secular Choral Music. Of that interesting lecture an account appeared in our columns last week; but nothing was then said about the scantiness of the audience which greeted the distinguished lecturer. It appears that a good deal of comment has thereby been excited in local circles, where it was felt that greater respect and enthusiasm would have been more creditable to a city which professes to be a metropolis of art. The Birmingham public, says private report, are quite willing to support artistic enterprise—when it costs nothing. To institute a small charge for any really artistic entertainment is to provoke a spontaneous outburst of absence on the part of the public, who stay away with admirable unanimity. But, after all, Birmingham is not an isolated instance. The provincial public is as anomalous as its metropolitan brother. Pay a singer seven hundred pounds to sing two songs, and straightway everyone feels that it would not be socially correct to be absent. Invite a famous musician to teach something of permanent value—and the hall is empty.

A libel suit, it may be supposed, is a prima donna's trump card. A jewel robbery, or the influenza, are as nothing compared with the *réclame* of a good honest libel case. We do not, however, draw any inferences from the fact that Madame Patti has been having a little fuss with certain Mexican newspapers; because, firstly, Madame Patti is too great an artist to need any such artificial aids to

success—has she not the soap of Messrs. Pears? and secondly, she was but indirectly concerned in this particular business. For the pleasure and information of her worshippers we give the story. In some of the aforesaid papers of Mexico a paragraph appeared stating that Madame Patti, in a conversation with Mrs. Diaz, wife of the Mexican President, made some highly depreciatory remarks concerning the lady's countrymen. Mrs. Diaz politely asked if the *Diva* would visit Mexico. "I—go to a country of savages?" said the songstress, "never, Senora!" And then, to use an appropriate Americanism, the fur flew. For publishing this story, declared by both ladies to be wholly false, the editors of "El Mundo" and "El Progreso" were cast into dungeons vile, from which they were released only on the publication of grovelling apologies. From which this moral is easily deducible—that, generally, in the words of Mr. Browning, "'Tis wiser being good than bad;" and, specifically, that it is very much wiser not to tell stories about a President's wife or a prima donna.

\* \*

Our readers will be interested to see the few bars of music following, for they were written by Robert Browning for the boating-song which is sung by Strafford's children in the last act of the play which has just been performed at Oxford. Their interest is, of course, literary rather than musical, for they are only a sketch of the crooning chant appropriate, and should in no way be looked at as a musical composition. They are quoted from the acting version of the play edited by E. H. Hickey.



\* \*

The students of the Royal Academy of Music, finding that their souls yearn for more adequate expression than is attainable through the medium of music, have decided to have a literary journal of their own. Mr. Frederic Corder, with whose talents in this direction our readers have ample acquaintance, will edit the organ, which will be called "The Overture," and there can be no doubt that it will prove an admirable channel for the interchange of ideas and information between the members and friends of the institution of Tenterden-street. We wish our unborn contemporary that which is scarcely desirable in the "common or garden" overture—no end of a career.

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The fourth year's issue of Mr. Hermann Klein's "Musical Notes" has just reached us. Apart from the value of this work to musicians as the only yearly record of music in England, that of the present issue has been largely increased by the inclusion of articles on the music of the year in Birmingham, Bristol, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, Oxford, and Yorkshire. These are signed by well-known writers such as Mr. Stratton, Dr. Hiles, and Dr. Mee, Mr. Klein himself being responsible, as before, for the rest of the volume. London musical doings are again divided into monthly chapters, each of which includes an obituary list. We shall shortly return to a consideration of this admirable little volume, which, in the meantime, we strongly advise every music lover to add to his "reference library." Messrs. Novello are the publishers.

We have received the complete prospectus of the Wind Instrument Chamber Music Society, to which we have more than once referred. The excellent aims of the society are herein set forth, together with the projected arrangements for the coming season. To these we may return later, confining ourselves for the moment to stating that at the "social meeting" announced for March 21 a quintet by Arnold Dolmetsch and Beethoven's Three Equales for Trombones will be performed; and that the prize of thirty guineas offered for a wind quintet was won by Mr. Charles Wood, out of thirty competitors.

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Mr. John Pettie, R.A., has again given proof of his love for music by placing his fine *atelier* at the disposal of a young pianist. On March 11th Mr. Marmaduke Barton will give a pianoforte recital, when he will be assisted by Miss Anna Russell as vocalist. The programme will include Beethoven's Sonata Appassionata, Schumann's "Les Papillons," and Liszt's Rhapsody No. 12. Mr. Barton, who is now a professor at the Royal College of Music, has not been heard in public since his return from Germany.

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"The Parents" is the title of a new magazine of which W. H. Allen and Co. have just published the first number. As far as may be gathered from its pages, it is chiefly designed to train up parents in the way they should go. This is a very laudable object, and there seems little doubt of its attainment, if the succeeding numbers prove of equal interest. There are, in these presents, articles on "Music and Children," by the Rev. H. R. Haweis; on "Rational Education," by Oscar Browning; and "Art Training in the Nursery," by Mrs. Francis Steinthal.

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At the five hundred and seventeenth concert of the People's Concert Society, given in the Town Hall, Poplar, Miss Marianne Rea and Mr. John Probert repeated with accustomed success their selections from "Lohengrin." Miss Rea sang "Elsa's Dream," Mr. Probert, "Lohengrin's Farewell," and the two artists united in the great duet. It may be noted that the entire English words of these three pieces were printed in the programme—an unusual but praiseworthy proceeding.

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The opening scene of the second act of an Italian opera composed by one of the most talented among the present students of the Royal College of Music (Mr. Godfrey Pringle) is to be publicly performed on March 10th at the Princes' Hall. "Messalina" is the title of the work, which is in the three customary acts.

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Mr. G. W. L. Marshall-Hall is about to publish by subscription a cycle of six songs, entitled "Life and Love." Two of these, viz., settings of Tennyson's "Oriana" and a scene from "Maud," are likely to attract considerable attention.

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Musicians will hear with mingled feelings of the destruction of Toronto University by fire. All will regret, of course, that such buildings and such a library should be thus lost, but—"Thy musical degrees perish with thee!"

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Dr. Mackenzie's "Cottar's Saturday Night" will be heard for the first time in London at the Albert Hall on March 5th. Mr. Barnby will yield the baton to the composer, who will on the same occasion conduct his "Dream of Jubal."



Karl Merz, director of Wooster University, Ohio, U.S.A., and a musical teacher of considerable influence there, died on 6th February, at the age of fifty-three. He was the editor of our American namesake, "Brainard's Musical World."

At Mr. J. H. Bonawitz's next Musical Evening the programme will include Beethoven's "Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage" overture, Mendelssohn's "Ruy Blas" overture, and the conductor's Quintett.

ERRATUM.—We regret a misprint which appeared in the first line of Mr. St. Clair Baddeley's poem, "The Storm," in our last issue, which should read, "All night was the storm wind howling."

### FALSE INTONATION.

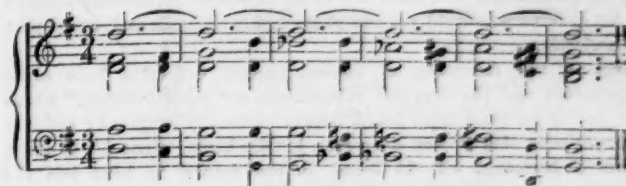
BY F. GILBERT WEBB.

(Concluded from Page 132.)

The circulation of full-score vocal chorus parts and the writing of the parts themselves with more regard to harmonic construction than individual melodiousness have had a detrimental effect on the art of sight-singing, inasmuch as they have engendered the habit of reading perpendicularly instead of horizontally—i.e., the measurement of intervals by their distance from some note in another part of the harmony instead of from the antecedent note of the particular part. At first it would appear advantageous for the chorus-singer to produce his notes with reference to the harmonic construction of each chord, but practically this is outweighed by consequent inattention to his individual part and the cultivation of the habit of "feeling about" for his notes, caused by the eye running up and down the score. Moreover, reading with regard to the harmony instead of the progression of each part must inevitably lead to variation of the pitch. This may seem a startling statement, but its truth is sustained by abundant experience. Sullivan's beautiful funeral hymn in the "Martyr of Antioch," familiar to most, affords a striking proof of the difficulty of maintaining a specific pitch in certain harmonic progressions, and every experienced choral conductor will see by a glance at the score where his choir will be most likely to flatten. If, however, each interval in each part is sung truly with the tempered scale, and without reference to the other parts, the pitch in the most chromatic progression will obviously remain the same. Choralists should therefore be told to keep their attention fixed on their individual parts, and to avoid being influenced by the harmonic combinations, especially when accompanied by instruments of fixed tonality such as the piano or organ. When entirely unaccompanied, or even accompanied by an orchestra, this strict adherence to the tempered scale is not so necessary, although any departure from the intervals of the tempered scale in accordance with harmonic requirements can only be safely ventured on by highly trained choirs.

The reason of the harmony being liable to alter a specified pitch lies in the fact that in modern compositions the pitch of each note is relative to the generator of the chord in which the note occurs. Thus the skip of a major third in a particular vocal part is not really an invariable interval; for instance, in a skip from G to B, the true pitch of the B cannot be ascertained until the chords accompanying each note are known, the interval from G to B being less if the notes are regarded as the first and third respectively in the key of G than if the B be harmonically treated as the leading note of the key of C. Thus, supposing a choralist sings the B with reference to the tonality of the key of G, i.e., as the third in the scale of G, and has afterwards to sing the C above as a tonic note, viz., the first note of the scale of C, the chances are that the C will be taken a trifle flat, especially if there be a diminuendo on the B; but this loss of pitch would have been avoided if the choralist had sung the G to B as a tempered major third, and without reference to the accompanying harmonies. This harmonic coherence and relationship forms the distinctive feature of what may be broadly styled the harmonic school as opposed to that of the more ancient contrapuntal; in the latter the harmony was a result from the progression of the parts, while in the former the progression of parts is dictated by the harmony. The absence of harmonic basis in music composed previously to the evolution of harmony as

a distinct art is very apparent when listening to its performance, and gives rise in modern ears to a curious feeling of vague tonality and unrest during its rendition. The fact of the real pitch of a note being varied according to the chord in which it is placed will be felt by most vocalists who sustain the upper D while carefully listening to the accompanying harmonies in the following example:—



In this the true pitch of the D is different with each change of chord, and would probably be so harmonically varied were the parts played by strings, but even when the chords are played on the ubiquitous piano the effort experienced by a sympathetic voice in maintaining the note D in one even tone of unvaried pitch distinctly shows the powerful influence that harmony exercises over vocal production.

It is true the variations in the vibrations of the D in the example are extremely small, but it is also true that even such slight inflections are recognised by sensitive musical ears. This is proved by the fact that a note conveys different impressions to such according to the harmonies with which it is accompanied. C accompanied by a chord of C, for instance, has a more cheerful effect on the mind than when accompanied by a chord of A flat, and this merely because in the one it is the key note, while in the other the mind regards it as the third of another scale, and therefore of altered pitch. That this effect should be noticed when the accompanying chords are played on the piano, and when consequently no change in the vibrations is possible, is probably due to a power of compensation in the ear similar to that possessed by the eye, so familiarly experienced in railway travelling when overtaken and passed by another train.

In these experiments it is necessary to distinguish between the effect of a chord played as a whole—i.e., when each note is of equal loudness, and when the same chord is produced softly, merely as accompaniment to one of its constituents, the mental impression conveyed being distinctly different. The individual character of each note in the former case is, to a certain extent, overcome by the equally powerful insistence of the characteristics of the other notes, while in the latter instance the peculiar tendency of one note sounding above its fellows is alike produced and enforced by the other notes, which however are played too softly to attract attention to their individual peculiarities, i.e., their suggested or real alteration of pitch. In other words, the effect produced on the ear by a chord, the notes of which are equally enforced, may be compared to that experienced by the eye when presented with a number of harmoniously blended colours of equal intensity of tint, while prominence given to one note in a chord may be likened to any one colour being intensified by juxtaposition with a paler shade of its complement, as a brilliant blue contrasted with a pale pink. There can be little doubt but that it is by this stimulating or depressing effect attributive to each note that music is able to express many subtle mental developments resulting from the comprehension of a poetic idea, and that similarly as harmoniousness of contrasted colours results from fulfilment of certain specific laws intuitively recognised by the brain so the success of musical works largely depends on the appropriate use and variation of harmonic diesis.

These delicate harmonic inflections are much disregarded by vocalists, although so marvellously sensitive are the vocal chords of those singers who possess that which is commonly called a "sympathetic voice" that these variations from our equal tempered scale are made unconsciously and in many cases in utter ignorance of their very existence. The peculiar construction of modern music, in which the power of expression is so greatly relegated to the harmony, or in other words its harmonic coherence essentially requires this sensitiveness on the part of the solo vocalist, and is the reason why some voices never seem to thoroughly harmonise with the accompaniment. It is impossible, however, to learn these minute but important variations as we mentally fix the major and minor intervals of the diatonic scale. The only practical method to acquire their attainment is for the vocalist to feel that the harmonies are expressive of personal emotion; then, and then only can he be sure of his voice being really in tune with the accompaniment. To some this statement may seem extra-

vagant, but it is only expressing in other words the old saying that "to sing well you must throw yourself into the music."

Obviously these facts apply equally to the violinist as to the vocalist both with regard to the ability to produce the intervals of our equal tempered scale and the beautiful inflections sometimes called forth by the emotions; the latter, however, should never be indulged in until perfect technique in the former is accomplished. To parody an old proverb, "First get your instrument," i.e., learn how to use it, and do not serenely imagine you can charm others until you can at least play the scale and every part of it perfectly.

Much of the foregoing, of course, implies defection from equal temperament and the frequent substitution of "just intonation," which is in reality far more often heard than is commonly supposed; and it is not improbable that modern composers, besides having given rise to a new system of harmony, will be found in the future to have laid the foundation of a vocal scale which will be more capable of expressing the emotions than that now in use. There are, indeed, already signs that our present tempered scale, which is the gradual growth of years, is yet in a state of transition. Composers seem more and more to employ the harmonies generated by the dominant,\* and to trust for artistic expression more to the suggestive effects of harmony than to simple melody; there is, moreover, an increasing endeavour to portray the more delicate shades of thought, and these by employment of small intervals and slight changes of harmony, the tendency of all of which is distinctly adverse to the perpetuation of the equal tempered scale and fixed tonality.

Thus the necessity that musicians, and especially vocalists and violinists should possess an intimate acquaintance with the harmonic construction of the works they perform, and an intellectual appreciation of the meaning of the text, is every day becoming more apparent; and it is also clear that certain chromatic progressions are unfitted for performance by large choral bodies, inasmuch as it is scarcely possible that such passages can be executed in tune, or without causing a flattening of the pitch, and from these results will probably be ineffective; for it is obvious that when the harmony of a chord in a chorus is intended to convey a specific impression, that impression will only be conveyed in proportion as the notes of such chord are pitched in their respectively true positions; these positions will vary from those of the tempered scale, and it therefore follows that either the chord must be imperfectly rendered or that there will be a danger of loss of original pitch. There is thus more excuse in many modern compositions for a choir getting "flat" than is generally known, for many of the defections are caused by an intuitive desire to obey harmonic dictates, and frequently the fault of loss of original pitch could with greater justness be laid to the composer than the performers.

### "UGLINESS IN ART."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "MUSICAL WORLD."

SIR: The writer of an interesting article under the above title in last week's issue does not think that either the ugly or the grotesque can be held a sufficient reason, *per se*, for the existence of any work professing to be artistic. But he reminds us that either may be occasionally introduced for purposes of contrast. These and other remarks of a similar kind were suggested by Liszt's "Todtentanz," which the writer describes as "absolutely ugly."

While fully agreeing with the opinions enunciated, and even with the severe condemnation of the piece in question, I cannot help thinking that Liszt has not been quite fairly dealt with. If that composer deliberately set himself the task of writing something which should merely produce the effect of ugliness or grotesqueness, then the censure would be just. But surely Liszt strove for something higher. With all his love for programme-music he would, I imagine, have been dissatisfied with his work had he thought that it was totally destitute of imagination, and that it was mere ugliness conveyed in sounds.

His keen appreciation of what was great and noble in art, his love of high-class poetry, painting, and literature would surely have made him feel that imitation without idealisation was of no real artistic value. Mr. C. A. Barry tells us that the "Todtentanz" was one of those works upon which the composer expended the greatest pains in bringing it to perfection, and surely we ought to imagine that his aim was a high one, however he may have fallen short in the accomplishment of it. The ugly and the

grotesque may not be "sufficient reasons" for a work of art, but on an impressionable mind like that of Liszt's they no doubt acted as moving forces. The "Wolf's Glen," with its frightful visions, in "Der Freischütz," stimulated Weber's imagination; the imps and monsters of the *Nuit de Sabbat* of the "Symphonie Fantastique" excited the fancy of the French composer; goblins and ghosts inspired Dvůrák when he wrote his "Spectre's Bride."

In all these works there are strong touches of realism: Weber imitates the beating of an owl's wings, Berlioz vulgarises a melody typical of love, Dvůrák paints in tones a "churchyard set with crosses." But the touches of imagination are still stronger: these composers use the things of this world, but only as stepping-stones to a world of fancy and emotion. Now in Liszt's "Todtentanz" the material element seems entirely to overpower the spiritual. Holbein's famous pictures may have aroused in him solemn thoughts and sorrowful feelings, but these he had not power to express in powerful musical language. It is thus I would explain the unsatisfactory effect of the "Todtentanz." The writer of the article in question seems, if I am not mistaken, to insinuate that Liszt strove to represent ugliness in sound, and this, one is loth to believe. Musicians have a perfect right to think the "Todtentanz" ugly, and the majority are probably of that opinion. But it does not necessarily follow that such was the impression which the composer wished to convey.

Yours truly,

J. S. S.

### THE WAGNER SOCIETY.

Mr. W. Ashton Ellis gave an interesting *résumé* on the 13th inst. of Wagner's letters to Theodor Uhlig, Wilhelm Fischer, and Ferdinand Heine recently published by Messrs. Breitkopf and Härtel. Mr. Ellis said that since the publication of the remarkable Wagner-Liszt correspondence nothing had appeared in connection with the great poet-composer so worthy of careful study, and so full of interest, as this volume of letters addressed by him to the friends of his early manhood. Expressing his regret that no English translation of the book had yet appeared, he said that in England and America few of us had hitherto realised how great a man had passed away from us sufficiently to treasure every record of his life and thoughts. Yet the glimpses of the daily history of the man afforded by these letters might have an interest even for those who cared nought for his music, for no cultured person nowadays, however prejudiced, could deny the fact that in Richard Wagner a new planet was added to the firmament of art; and, surely, the history and explanation of the very disturbances effected by this new-comer should call forth at least some curiosity. If the Wagner-Liszt correspondence was of untold value, as drawing the curtain aside from an almost romantic epistolary companionship of two men whose names are household words, the present volume was no less to be prized, as showing one of these two in his frank comradeship with those who had fought by his side in the ranks. With the exception of two or three letters which he would notice, we should not find, as in the earlier series, the same unfolding of Wagner's deepest thoughts on the mysteries of life and the arcana of Religion and Art, but in their place we should see the warm blood coursing through the veins of one who, whatever his detractors might say to the contrary, was beloved of all who came into anything like intimate contact with him. If ever Wagner aroused the feelings of personal enmity, it was not by reason of a like sentiment on his part, but from the outspoken way in which he denounced whatever of bombast and philistinism he discovered around him. Born without patrimony, and nursed by want, life meant for him a bitter struggle, and if his blows were hard, at least they were dealt openly and with fairness, whilst the smallest kindly act and real sympathy extended to him won him as a lifelong friend. These letters were addressed to friends whom Wagner left behind in Dresden when exiled for the share he took in the revolution of May, 1849. They dated, with the exception of a few earlier ones, from this period, and for the most part covered the next four or five years, a few taking us down as late as 1868. This epoch of Wagner's life was fraught with the greatest consequence for his artistic future, and was that of his greatest literary activity. The letters were therefore beyond all value, and should be studied together with those of Liszt, to which they form more than a supplement, for the volume is larger than either of the two portions of the Wagner-Liszt correspondence. In this instance, however, we had none of the letters to, but only those from, the master.

\* By this is implied the chord of the "Supertonic," i.e., the dominant of the dominant.



The largest section of the present volume, about two-thirds, was occupied by letters to Uhlig, a violinist in the Royal orchestra, who took upon himself much of Wagner's business arrangements in connection with the rights of performance of his works. Uhlig seemed also to have had some literary talent himself, for we found the Meister referring to various magazine articles by him, and unbosoming to him many of his own ideas for his prose writings. Fischer monopolised two-thirds of the balance of the correspondence. He was director of choruses at the Dresden opera-house, and seemed to have been a stanch friend, honest, but occasionally a little gruff. Upon Uhlig's death Fischer inherited the somewhat arduous post of Wagner's *homme d'affaires* at Dresden. Finally we came to Heine, who must have mislaid a good number of the letters he received, for he was only represented by fifty pages, though the terms of affection in which Wagner referred to him throughout the volume would almost warrant us in believing that he, an old family friend, was his favourite out of the group of three. In this, and other respects, we could only regret that there was no editorial introduction to enlighten us. This much, however, we knew from the evidence of these letters, that Heine was a comedian engaged at the Dresden Court Theatre, and a designer of the costumes for that theatre, and that he brought into finished form the rough sketches that Wagner himself jotted down for the scenery of his earlier works.

As might be expected there was much in the letters which threw a new light on various important episodes in the great artist's career, and that confuted several popular errors. A considerable part of the letters to Fischer, which extend from the spring of 1841 to the autumn of 1852, was taken up with the subject of the production of "Rienzi" at Dresden, and the endeavours and alterations necessary to secure its performance there. Some of Wagner's suggestions to overcome the beggary of those who withheld their permission for its performance at the State Theatre were very amusing, as, for instance, when Wagner learns the character of the Cardinal is objected to, he asks Fischer, "Cannot you dress him up so that he won't be recognised as a Cardinal, at least, for some time?"

A quotation from a letter to Heine, showing the origin of his literary work, was also of much interest:—

"At the moment I look upon it as a duty to satisfy an inner necessity, which impels me to speak out once for all clearly and definitely upon the subject of the whole practice of Art. There is already in the press in Paris and Leipzig a short treatise of mine: 'Art and Revolution.' Presently a second essay will follow this: 'The Art Work of the Future,' which will finally be concluded by a third: 'The Art Workers of the Future.' When thou makest their acquaintance, dear friend, thou wilt understand, I hope, that, not from outside influence, but from deepest inner need, I have evolved to what I am, and now proclaim the views which I hold. It seems to be thy fancy that all that which has failed to please thee in myself, and that, owing to the tendencies of the age in general, and to my nature in particular, thou hast not been able to explain at once, must be set down to the evil influence of another. The premises of my creed, as thou hast known them from my works and from my views, thou has admitted to be right, but hast drawn back in terror from the logically necessary conclusions from these premises. In this thou hast been wrong, just as our whole so-called cultured world is wrong, when it will not allow B, after it has admitted A. But this B demands also courage and conviction set firm as a rock; and these two have nowhere a sure seat, hence we may explain the present sorry outcome of great inceptions. Thou thinkest that my conviction will part me from my artistic production? Quite the opposite. Since I have seen clearly that our whole public art is no Art, but only art-journeymanship, that it, with all the foundations on which it is built, must go unpitied to the devil, only since then have I at last found true joy in art-work, in that art-work which shall spring by itself by natural laws, from the Future, and at which, for my own part, recognising its conditionments, I now can and will toil with liking and with love. This process, dear friend, comes not about by eating of oysters and delicacies in comfortable sofa-corners; on the broadest market-place of life must one first sharpen his teeth by biting stones, ere the eye become as clear as the inner nature of this eye permit."

Of equal value were the references made in other letters to the origin of his operas, notably those referring to the "Nibelungen," and the theatre which was to be built for its performance. One letter treating of the conducting of Beethoven's symphonies and the reason why, in Wagner's opinion, Mendelssohn and many others failed to impress the poetical significance of these works contained much that might be read with profit,

particularly that portion which insisted that conductors should possess a lively perception of the inner meaning and poetical elements of the works they conduct. Wagner's appreciation of woman's power and influence was shown in such happy phrases as "Women are the nerves of life, they take up everything so much more freshly and sympathetically than men" and others of similar import. In other letters we were shown his intense appreciation of the beauties of nature and sympathy with her various forms and changes, while his love of animals was seen in his solicitude for his little dog, which was getting "too fat to bark," and his pathetic account of the death of his talking parrot.

The treasurer of the society, Mr. Birnstingl, in proposing a vote of thanks to Mr. Ellis, remarked that it was to be hoped an English translation of these letters would at no very distant day be published, and that Mr. Ellis would be entrusted with the important work. Mr. Birnstingl also referred to the existence of other valuable letters in the hands of Mr. Ferdinand Praeger, to whose firm and helpful friendship Wagner had acknowledged himself to be so greatly indebted, and hoped that this correspondence, which extended over even a longer period than that covered by the letters they had just been considering, might also be rendered accessible to the Society.

G. W.

### FOREIGN NOTES.

The "Allgemeine Musik-Zeitung" reproduces a lengthy article on the projected Mozart-Festspielhaus at Salzburg, from the pen of the distinguished Dresden critic, Herr Ludwig Hartmann, who exposes the impracticability and inutilty of the scheme with very considerable keenness and vigour: the absolute difference of aim and object between such a theatre and that at Bayreuth being especially enforced. The appearance of such an article is important, for Herr Hartmann is by no means a thorough-going Wagnerite.

In the new oratorio (or requiem, which is perhaps a better title for it), "Selig aus Gnade," by Herr Albert Becker, to be produced at Berlin on March 7, the anniversary of the death of the Emperor William I., a return is to be made to the old practice of introducing chorales to be sung by the congregation: the melodies of three of these are to be given in the books of words, and the audience invited to join in singing them.

The famous violinist, Herr August Wilhelmj, of whom too little has been heard of late, is about to reappear in Berlin at a concert on the 27th inst.

The Sinfonie-Ode, "Das Meer," by J. L. Nicodé, which was so greatly admired on its production at Leipsic a year ago, has just been performed with brilliant success at Berne. Unfortunately the composer's state of health did not permit him to be present to receive the honours which would have been lavished on him.

A Lortzing-cycle has been given at the Stadttheater of Hamburg with complete success from 17th January to 1st February. The seven operas performed were "Der Waffenschmied," "Undine," "Der Wildschütz," "Zar u. Zimmermann," "Die beiden Schützen," "Hans Sachs," and "Casanova." As most of these operas are about fifty years old, there is evidently a vitality in Lortzing's works which is not a little surprising.

Felix Weingartner, Kapellmeister at Mannheim, has just given performances of "The Flying Dutchman" and of "Tristan" absolutely "without cuts." He is now preparing to perform the "Ring," relying entirely on the local resources.

The Richard-Wagner Museum of Herr Nicolaus Oesterlein at Vienna has in the course of last year acquired a very large number of original MSS., pictures, portraits and books (including some great rarities) relating to the composer. Among these acquisitions is an album discovered at a little place in Bavaria, which contains autographs of the late and present kings, and of many other distinguished persons. Periodicals of all countries relating to the Wagner cause are taken at the Museum, which should be kept in mind by musicians who make a pilgrimage to the Austrian capital.

Italian papers record the death of Cavaliere Alessandro Sala, who died on the 7th inst., at the age of seventy-four. A native of Verona, he first

became known as a distinguished organist and pianist, wrote two operas, a *Trilogia sinfonica*, two masses, a *Miserere*, an elegy on the death of Victor Emanuel, and an enormous number of smaller vocal compositions. He was also a wise and generous patron of music and musicians in every way, and his death is mourned as a serious loss to his country.

M. Reyer's "*Salammbô*," produced at the Brussels Théâtre-Royal de la Monnaie on the 10th inst., appears not only to have won a brilliant success but also to have deserved it. The libretto has been arranged from Flaubert's novel by M. Camille du Locle with much skill, but apparently with somewhat too large a sacrifice of the emotional element to the exhibition of mere magnificence and theatrical display. Battles, processions, choruses of priests and warriors abound everywhere, and meanwhile the relations of *Salammbô* and *Matho* are only developed at intervals, with the result that a less degree of sympathy is inspired than the situations would seem to demand. The "*Guide Musical*" justly observes that *littérateurs* are but too apt to consider that the essence of a musical drama consists of "splendour, emphasis, pomp, the roll of drums, and the cries of the oboe." And hence M. Reyer's score is somewhat too rich in broad and very noisy choral movements. There are, indeed, only three or four scenes between the principal characters, and the chief of these, that between *Salammbô* and *Matho* in Act IV, suffers from being placed between two pompous scenes which kill the effect. Apart from this mistake the music is everywhere recognised as exceedingly powerful and sympathetic; but it is most unfortunate that owing to the librettist's alteration of the conclusion of the story, the last act is cut down to such scanty proportions that the musician has no opportunity to give any musical development to the climax of his work. M. Reyer uses one or two leit-motifs, but only by way of simple repetition, with nothing of the polyphonic treatment and development which characterise Wagner's use of the leit-motif. It is only in the unity given to the work by this process that M. Reyer's opera can be said to show traces of Wagnerian influence. The chief performers were M<sup>me</sup>. Caron (*Salammbô*), M. Sellier (*Matho*), M. Bouvet (*Spendius*), High Priest (*Vergnet*), and M. Renaud (*Hamilcar*), all of whom (but especially the first and last) are said to have given great satisfaction.

### THE REID FESTIVAL.

(FROM OUR EDINBURGH CORRESPONDENT.)

EDINBURGH, FEB. 18.—The Reid Festival of 1890 will be chiefly memorable as being that at which, after an uninterrupted connection of twenty-one years—during which it has made these annual musical gatherings what they now have become—the Hallé orchestra was last heard. This unfortunate severance of so long and distinguished an association arises, as the Festival Book has it, in consequence of the "lack of support of late of the supplementary concerts," of those, that is, which it has been customary to give in addition to the actual concert in memory of General Reid—"and for other reasons"—whatever they may be. And more's the pity. For, ever since Sir Charles Hallé and his orchestra have been associated with the Festival, these annual concerts have been, beyond all question, the most notable musical events of the year. As regards the future it is impossible to speak. Opinion is, just now, so much divided as to what is right and necessary in giving proper effect to the terms of General Reid's bequest, in relation to the provision of an annual commemorative concert, that it is useless even to conjecture what will take the place of the present system. One thing at least is certain, that whatever substitute may be devised for these concerts as they have been known for the past twenty years, it cannot at first, in any case, approach the educational value of interpretations of the greatest orchestral works by the finest band in Great Britain.

Even though a national, not the chimera of a local, orchestra (about which a good deal is being written and said just now) were a possibility, and could be converted into a permanent institution—than which the consummation of no project is to be more devoutly desired, nor more earnestly striven after—it would under the most favourable conditions take years before anything approaching the standard of perfection attained by the Manchester orchestra could be looked for; and meanwhile musical education could not do otherwise than suffer. Whatever the Reid Festival of the future may turn out to be, and whatever form it may take, it is more than doubtful whether any of those who have had the privilege

of personally knowing what it has been in the immediate past will regard that past otherwise than with feelings of regret, or will view the change as being by any means an unqualified improvement.

In connection with this determination on the part of Sir Charles Hallé not again to allow his orchestra to visit Edinburgh several wild rumours have been afloat, and statements based upon them have appeared in the daily press. These have been to the effect that not only would the orchestra not again come to Edinburgh, but would be actually broken up, or would, at least, pass under another direction. To these reports and to some other equally senseless figments Sir Charles took occasion to refer at a reception given by the Edinburgh Society of Musicians on Saturday afternoon to Lady Hallé, and, of course, gave them, as everyone at all conversant with such matters knew he would do, the *coup de grâce*.

Coming to the consideration of the Festival itself, it may be said that the whole of the performances came fully up to, and, as was only fitting in what was practically a farewell appearance, in many noteworthy instances surpassed, the standard of previous years. One special feature of this year's Festival, as compared with its immediate predecessors, was the introduction, at one of the three concerts of the series, of a choral work (Mendelssohn's "*Lobgesang*"), which serves to bring the local choral union, whose fortunes of late have not been the brightest, into association with Sir Charles Hallé's band; and the sphere of artistic influence into which the local organisation, which is worthy of all encouragement, was thus brought cannot but have been to its lasting advantage.

The concerts, as usual, were held in the room which is dignified by the name of the music hall, but which, as a matter of fact, is as ill-adapted a *locale* for musical entertainments on a large scale as can well be conceived. Indeed, until Euterpe is provided with a more fitting temple it is hopeless to expect that musical taste and education will develop and grow in the northern metropolis as they have of late years done in many another less populous city where a suitable habitation has been found for her worship.

Among the principal orchestral works given during the Festival were the following:—The C minor Symphony of Beethoven, and Schumann's Symphony in B flat; six overtures—"Zauberflöte," "Guillaume Tell," "Tannhäuser," "Euryanthe," the "Leonora" (No. 3), and "Fidelio." Besides these also there were two or three orchestral numbers of less importance: Berlioz' "Ballet des Sylphes" and Liszt's Rhapsodie Hongroise, No. 4. The concertos were Beethoven's "Emperor," for pianoforte; and for violin Spohr's No. 8, Op. 47, "In modo di Scena cantante," and Beethoven's in D. Sir Charles Hallé was the pianist, and Lady Hallé the violin soloist, and they each, besides sustaining the solo parts in the concertos, contributed several other enjoyable items to the programmes, chief among those of the former being Chopin's "Grand Polonaise" in A flat, and of the latter the Adagio from Spohr's Ninth Concerto.

The vocalists engaged were Miss Anna Williams and Mr. Lloyd, both of whom appeared to very great advantage, and were on more than one occasion recalled several times to receive the enthusiastic acknowledgments of the audience.

The first concert, the Reid Concert proper, which is always prefaced by an orchestral piece, consisting of *Introduction*, *Pastorale*, *Minuet*, and *March*, by the founder, was held on Thursday, the 13th, being the anniversary of his birthday; the second, at which the "*Lobgesang*" was given, on Friday, the 14th; and the third and final concert on the afternoon of Saturday, the 15th inst. The audiences were large on each occasion.

Music presents to me all forms of order, all forms of harmony, intellectual and moral as well as physical. It selects out of millions of particulars—(to talk of its limited nature is absurd)—those which are most suitable to be brought together. It represents the highest modes of organisation. It is a theatre in which every phase of human life can be best portrayed. Its very discords, as in real life, can be so beautifully introduced as to raise the hearer into some new and higher sphere of harmony hitherto unknown or unappreciated by him. I tell you again, as I have told you before, that I hold to, as we farmers say, the words of dear old Sir Thomas Browne, "That tavern music, which makes one man merry and another mad, evokes in me a sense of divine harmony and a full belief in the beneficence of the Divine Creator." Then it is the finest form of education that has ever been devised. A noble training is accomplished, mostly without any pedantry, almost unconsciously; and observe this—with less accretion of vanity than in any other way.—*Sir A. Helps*.



## The Organ World.

### THE GUILD OF ORGANISTS.

A very pleasant gathering was the *conversazione* of the Guild of Organists, held in their rooms at Burlington Hall, Savile-row, W., on Monday evening last. There were glees and part songs given by the South London Musical Club, under the direction of Mr. Charles Stevens: instrumental items most ably performed by Miss Jessie Hudson, Messrs. F. Alcock (oboe), W. H. Stocks, L.R.A.M., C. T. Corke, A.R.A.M., C. H. Kempling, A. Dolmetsch (who played two solos on the *Viole d'Amour*—one formerly the property of the late Carli Zoeller), G. F. Huntley, Mus. B., Cantab.; songs by Miss May Pinney (a daughter of the well-known and highly-esteemed organist of St. George's, Hanover-square), Messrs. W. H. Stevenson and A. R. Roddis. Miss Pinney particularly was highly successful, she has a fine contralto voice, a most artistic style, considerable dramatic feeling, and, lastly, about the clearest enunciation we have ever heard. Mr. J. C. Ames played several solos, demonstrating the wonderful possibilities, in the way of execution, of the Janko keyboard when applied to the pianoforte; his performance of an organ fugue, by Bach, as written, with the addition of octaves to the pedal part, was listened to with great interest.

By special arrangement with the National Telephone Company and the kind permission of R. D'Oyley Carte, Esq., direct communication with the Savoy Theatre was maintained throughout the evening, and all were anxious to hear the "Gondoliers"—"laid on" to the premises like gas or water. A very good collection of ancient MSS., curious instruments, &c., was exhibited, and excited much interest. The general arrangements reflected much credit on the executive committee, Messrs. G. F. Huntley, C. P. Corke, W. H. Stocks, and Moreton Hand, while the genial sub-warden, Mr. J. T. Field, was ubiquitous.

### NOTES.

On the 28th ult., the eve of St. David's Day, a Welsh National Festival service will be celebrated in Welsh at St. Paul's Cathedral at 7.30 p.m. The sermon will be preached by the Bishop of S. Asaph.

At St. Marylebone Parish Church, Sullivan's "Prodigal Son" and Stainer's "Crucifixion" will be given alternately on every Thursday at 8 p.m. Admission procurable by stamped envelope to A. Claxton, Esq., 38, Devonshire-place, W.

A new organ erected by Mr. G. M. Holdich in the Parish Church, Buckland, Berks., was opened by a special choral service on the 13th inst. After the service the Rev. G. Wharton, who accompanied throughout, played a selection of pieces well calculated to display the manifold resources of the instrument. The organ has two manuals, the usual pedal board, and twenty stops of extremely good quality of tone, and is fitted with tubular pneumatic action throughout. An especial feature in its construction is its being played from a console, a practice to be much recommended as conducive to the performer obtaining a more just estimation of the effects he produces than when he is placed in close proximity to his instrument.

At Christ Church, Woburn-square, on Ash Wednesday, there was performed a musical meditation, entitled "The Temptation," which Mr. F. T. Lowden, the organist and choirmaster, has composed to words by the Rev. J. J. Glendinning Nash. Mr. C. Percival Park and Mr. Sidney Galey took the solos in this interesting work, which will be repeated on each Wednesday throughout Lent.

At Christ Church, Newgate-street, an organ recital was given, on behalf of the choir fund, on February 13th, by Mr. George Cooper. The vocalists were Miss Burchett, Miss H. V. Bruce, and Mr. J. H. Williams. The programme included "Evening Prayer" (Smart), Prelude and Fugue (D Major) (A. W. Bach), Air, varied (Mozart) and Cantilene Pastorale (Guilmant).

## The Dramatic World.

### "OUR BOYS."

LONDON, WEDNESDAY, 19TH FEBRUARY, 1890.

MY DEAR MR. FIELDMOUSE,—

I think there is hardly anything more curious—hardly anything which more clearly shows the doubtful value of the opinion of the cultured specialist—than the change which has come over the criticism of "superior people" in the matter of "Our Boys." How well I recollect the tone they took during its lengthy run—have I not reason to remember it, for did I not take that tone myself? I am not, I humbly trust, a superior person; I cannot read the "Saturday Review," and I shudder at the scholarly playfulness of the "Daily News;" but in the case of "Our Boys" I certainly felt, or affected to feel, a superiority to the multitude—I think it was genuine, but I am quite sure that it was silly.

For now here is every one turning round and saying what a capital play it is; and whereas your critic then was wont to cry "Is this altogether worthy of the author of 'Cyril's Success?'" he now shouts, with an unnecessary vehemence of satire, "And that—your 'Cyril's Success'—was once held to be the masterpiece of him who created the Butterman!"

I quite admit that there are plenty of intellectual men who do not care for "Our Boys" now, and did not care for it then, and who are and were quite right, from their own point of view; but this was not the point of view of the critics of whom I speak—including your penitent Mus in Urbe—who quarrelled with the play a great deal because of technical faults which were really merits, and who much preferred highclass comedies vastly inferior and now justly forgotten.

It was not so much the newspaper-critics of the day—most of the leading ones, as far as I recollect, reviewed "Our Boys" very favourably; but the amateurs of the higher drama—*quorum pars minima fui*—and the thoughtful and ambitious actors. If I remember rightly, one special fault which we found was the "thinness," the want of complication, of the plot: forgetting that there is nothing like human nature for thickening your plots, and that, given the human nature, you can hardly have too much simplicity.

Now, there is hardly anything more notable in "Our Boys" than the directness with which the story is told, the absence of turnings-off to the right or to the left. Except for a very brief misunderstanding between the Butterman and Clarissa in the second act, and the foolish bonnet episode in the third, there is not a scene in the whole play which does not carry on in a straight line the story of the two fathers who trained their sons on infallible systems, and found their fallibility when the crucial question of love and marriage came to be decided.

There is, we may well admit, only one character in the play which is drawn with any great freshness or vigour—perhaps excepting the bright little sketch of Belinda—but that one stands on his feet so firmly, is so absolutely true (but for just a touch of exaggeration in the first scenes) that no personage on our modern stage remains more vividly in the memory than Perkyn Middlewick, the butterman. We have, of course, in London had the advantage of seeing Mr. James's magnificent performance of the part; but in every country town the lines of Middlewick—no matter, it would seem, who was their speaker—have become household words; and "inferior Dossit" and the "ultipomatum" are quoted by hundreds who have not even seen the play.

Which play is not, one allows, greatly stimulating as an

intellectual exercise, nor are its characters precisely ladies and gentlemen—"society people" in plays generally are not: which may be a touch of realism. Robertson is one of our only modern dramatists who could give real distinction to his people; and even he had his failures. But the fact stares one in the face, confuting, I cannot but think, those who will allow no merit to Byron as a dramatist, that "Our Boys" has proved itself—so far—enormously the most successful play ever written: that it has given pleasure, void of all offence, literally to millions of playgoers of all classes: and that it is almost without parallel in the number of its amusing lines, which are seldom mere puns. (Except in the sense that the great majority of epigrams will be found, on analysis, to be founded on plays upon words.)

"So far," I have said, it is the most successful; and—though one does anticipate for it three centuries hence the popularity of "Hamlet"—it has had time to show that it wears well. It has hardly aged more than "Caste"—an infinitely finer work, one need not say—and indeed neither of them has aged at all. I profess a warm regard for these happy plays of homely English life, which "give delight and hurt not," as for Dickens's novels—yea, and Trollope's, which I love. I see, of course, the danger of confining our stage to them and them alone—a danger terribly real in the past, but daily diminishing, as Ibsen and Zola gain ground. (But only the other night an old player said to me, "If the Ibsen school becomes popular in England, it will mean that the English stage is doomed!")

But there—we all have our foibles, and perhaps optimism is mine. Anyhow, I enjoyed the play the other night; and, on the whole, thought well of the players. Of Mr. David James in the part which crowned his fame it is absurd to speak now; let me only recall to you for a moment the astonishing variety of the successes which this fine actor had made, before he met the Butterman and played him for five years—more or less. Apart from his creations in burlesque—Mr. Gilbert called him the finest burlesque actor of his day—there were comic servants, comic "cads," homely old men, and parts with a strong dash of what I may call eccentric tragedy. Of all these good people I remember none better than a charming sketch in James Albery's disappointing comedy "Pride." To see Mr. James as Perkyn Middlewick, you would never imagine that he could play a gentleman—he is so real, so effortless a cockney. Yet Sir Ball Brace was a broken down little baronet, with a touch of Harold Skimpole and yet a good heart, with snatches of song sung in a quavering old voice; and by mere force of genius Mr. James realised him exquisitely.

In "Our Boys," now, I only note his tendency—perhaps inevitable—to develop the comedy with the sacrifice of some of those little touches of pathos which were so pretty in the last act. Otherwise, there is all the old force, the old humour—only one word is gone: and that, alas! is "ultrapomatum," which somehow does not stand out as of old.

The most clear-cut and satisfactory of the other performances is perhaps Mr. Gardiner's Talbot Champneys; but Mr. Leonard Boyne—though the shy hesitation of his first scene with Violet reminds one of George D'Alroy, or even of young Champneys, rather than of the dashing Charles—Mr. Boyne gets a passion, a natural feeling, into the quarrel with the father which has never, I think, been reached before in this part. Mr. Elwood is certainly the most distinguished Sir Geoffrey we have had. Miss Olga Brandon is bright and pretty as Mary Melrose, but she needs stronger work than this; and the other ladies are adequate, but hardly more than adequate.

Even as I write, the absurdity of it comes over me; the picture

that these words of mine are too likely to bring up before you, of the critic—the "indolent irresponsible reviewer"—sitting comfortably in his study and dealing out faint praise for adequacy to men and women hard at work! Surely, my dear Mr. Fieldmouse, if acting be the most difficult of arts, criticism is the easiest; which remembering, let silence be as often as possible the pronouncement of your modest

MUS IN URBE.

### BROWNING'S "STRAFFORD" AT OXFORD.

In the world of art experiments are sometimes as necessary as in the world of science; but the necessity of making them is not seldom cruel. Perhaps this is largely because he who conducts them is unwilling to operate on any body which is properly to be called "vile," but chooses too often some high or reverend form or example of art. The amateur—we are speaking in this connection rather of the interpreter than of the creator—selects, in music, the most noble instances whereon to perform his unsuccessful miracles of daring; the student in painting perpetrates wicked and libellous copies—by courtesy so called—of Rubens, Titian, and Tintoretto; the amateur of the stage, scorning the gently unexacting comedietta, must needs intone, with many emendations, the garbled text of Shakspeare. For the sake of contrast are these things said, for we wish to accentuate the pleasant disappointment which awaited those who had received with derision the announcement of a performance of Robert Browning's "Strafford" by the Oxford University Dramatic Society. "Shall these crude amateurs succeed," we asked with a touch of scorn, "where the giant Macready failed? Let us admit once and for all that Browning, glorious poet-teacher though he was, is not a dramatist, and that the best respect we can show to his memory is to leave his plays to the student. They will never prove of interest to the theatre-goer, who cares nothing for subtlety of spiritual analysis, but only seeks to have his jaded palate tickled with coarse melodrama, or, worse, with the latest refinements of Parisian salacity." Such were the sentiments of the average Browning lover who heard of the projected revival; such, we confess, were our own. It was with no anticipations of keen enjoyment that we journeyed to the glorious old city wherein the spirit of olden art seems 'still to have her visible shrine. In short, not to put matters in too poetic a fashion, we expected to be bored. After what manner we were completely disappointed shall be here set forth, premising first that the disappointment was of a double sort. Three of the leading actors were excellent—two absolutely fine; and the play was of absorbing interest.

It will not be necessary to relate at any great length the circumstances under which "Strafford" was written. All students know how, late in 1836, Macready said to Browning, "Write me a play, and keep me from going to America." "Strafford" was written, and put in rehearsal at Covent Garden—then at its lowest financial ebb—in March of the following year, the first performance taking place on May 1; and with what result? The common idea is that the play proved an utter failure, judged on its own merits, and the common idea is, as usual, wrong. "Strafford" was given no fair chance of success. True, Macready played the hero and Helen Faucit the heroine, Lady Carlisle. But the play was wretchedly mounted, Osbaldiston refusing to spend a penny upon it; Dale, who played the King, was stone-deaf; Vandenhoff, as Pym, walked through his important part with an absolute disregard of its meaning or value, and after five performances suddenly withdrew. No play—at least, no play of merit—could stand against such a shock of circumstances, even in these days of theatrical enlightenment. Scarcely could the refined idealism of an Adelphi melodrama or a Gaiety burlesque survive such mischances; and "Strafford" succumbed; although, be it said, each of the five performances was witnessed by a full and enthusiastic audience. It will surely, therefore, be well if future biographers or critics of the great poet bear in mind that the initial failure of "Strafford" was not due to inherent defects in the play.

So far, however, criticism is purely negative. It is more imperative to ask what positive merits the play possesses which entitle it to a place among modern dramas. The figure of Strafford, as seen in history, is doubtless an imposing one. Hated and hunted, finally betrayed to death by the master whom he had served, albeit with occasional aberrations of





BROWNING'S "STRAFFORD" AT OXFORD.

STRAFFORD  
(Mr. H. IRVING, Jun.).

LADY CARLISLE  
(Mrs. CHARLES SIM).

"You love me, child! Ah, Strafford can be loved  
As well as Vane!"

(Act V. Sc. 2.)





fidelity, his form looms large against the sombre sky which stretched over the Stuart dynasty. Yet, so far, he has not been treated by biographers as a man of any particular virtue. John Forster, indeed, attempted to show us a Strafford of nobler proportions. "In one word," said that writer in his "Lives of British Statesmen," "what is desired to impress upon the reader, before the delineation of Wentworth in his after years, is this—that he was consistent to himself." To prove the essential unity of the various phases of Strafford's career was the task to which Forster addressed himself; but it can hardly be held that he succeeded entirely. The man's individuality was so intense, and in some ways he seemed to rise so nearly to greatness, that it is natural to seek some way of reconciliation for the opposing qualities of his character. Browning, it would seem, felt this; and in his play he has offered a portrait of the statesman which is more pleasant, to the hero-worshipper at least, than any of those given by historians. Certainly external accuracy is lacking, both in the character of the hero and his relations to his contemporaries. But it is, we may hope, needless to offer here any apology for this, since the method pursued by Browning is the method of all great art in dealing with so-called historic facts. History is of all sciences or pseudo-sciences at present the most imperfect, for there is no least incident written in the annals of any nation of which more than one view is not possible. The very skeleton and framework of history is so colossal that no two beholders could view it at the same angle, or furnish identical reports of its structure. Therefore we have little reason for complaint if a great artist, in dealing with any noteworthy figure or epoch, casts the tradition of the schools to the winds, and shows us either as his keener insight has conceived it. We shall not, for instance, quarrel with Browning because in his play he has imagined an early friendship between Pym and Strafford, which lends a deeper pathos to the final scene, in which the two rivals meet to say farewell at the scaffold steps. Nor shall we question the poet's right to show Lady Carlisle as a woman of softer mould, of purer ambition, than the Lady Carlisle of common history. To us of to-day it matters little whether this, or that, were so. What we do want is that our hearts should be touched, our sympathies deepened and purified by a story of men who might have lived and loved and suffered; by a picture of devotion, and aspiration, and despair. That Browning has given us such a story will not be lightly denied by those who have read—much less by those who have seen—"Strafford." On the one hand we are shown a portrait of the man who loved his King better than his country or his life, and against it is set the portrait of him who, better than king or friend, loved his country. And, softening the sharp colours of these contrasted devotions, there is the passionate love of the woman who stands ever between Strafford and his enemies—worst of them the King. Here is material enough surely for a play of the deepest interest; and the colours are woven with subtlest skill into a splendid fabric. It will hardly be expected that an elaborate account should be given of the details of the play, but we may be permitted to point out what seem the most salient features of this tragic work.

If one might for a moment adopt the phraseology of music, one would say that the piece is founded upon two *leit motifs*. The one, passionate, soaring, is for Strafford and his personal loyalty to that kingly weakling Charles; the other stern and menacing, yet with a subdued element of sadness, is for Pym. The latter is heard for the first time in the opening scene, where Pym pleads with his unbending comrades for a more kindly judgment of their foe. The "Strafford" motive, to continue the analogy, is heard, though scarcely in its completest form, when, having learnt from Lady Carlisle in what way the King had been misguided during his absence, he finds himself face to face with Pym, who prays him to return to the national cause. It is heard more strongly in the second act, when Strafford returns once more from Ireland, to find that again the King has betrayed him. He had believed that at last the King trusted him completely, and accepted his counsels, and now he finds all undone. He pours bitter reproaches upon the weak King, whose service he will leave, whose perfidy he will reveal to Pym. But at the very instant Pym and Hampden enter. With a sudden rush his old loyalty returns, and he accepts before his enemies responsibility for the very step which he knows to be fatal. And when Pym has left him, with all hope gone of his ultimate return, comes what is perhaps the finest scene of all. Lady Carlisle, knowing well that Charles is incapable of fidelity to this, his most faithful servant, would proffer Strafford her love, which at least is steadfast. She begins her confession, for it was she who had first taught him to love the King; but, as he breaks in upon her faltering speech with words which show that to him nothing else is of account, nor any other love of value, she yields up her brief, passionate hope.

"One must not lure him from a love like that!  
Oh, let him love the King and die!"

A "curtain" is by some thought ineffective when it falls on a single figure, but there is something infinitely, nobly dramatic in the ending of this scene. Knowing at last the insincerity and weakness of the man he loves, he goes forth to do the fatal bidding; goes forth with despairing courage—

To breast the bloody sea  
That sweeps before me; with one star for guide.  
Night has its first, supreme, forsaken star.

The ordinary elements of dramatic effect are to be found more abundantly in the third act. Strafford has returned again, intending to crush his enemies with the proofs of their treachery which he has discovered. He does not know that at the very moment of his entry Pym is impeaching him in Parliament, and he goes to the House of Lords little suspecting what awaits him there. In the antechamber he is arrested, and the scene closes as he yields his sword and kneels before his peers. The fourth act demands little description, although there is here a yet further crescendo both of dramatic and emotional significance. The trial has proceeded triumphantly for Strafford, at whose very glance his rival quails and cowers. He has flung back the charges one by one; but nothing can turn Pym from his path. To the King, alone in his chamber at Whitehall, comes Pym, to wring by scarcely-veiled threats the royal signature to the Bill of Attainder. [All yields in strength of interest, however, to that last scene in the Tower. Strafford sits there talking with his children, listening to their prattle, and yet thinking rather of his King, of whose pardon he is so assured. Hollis enters, with Charles in slight disguise, bearing the death-warrant. With Hollis he talks of the quiet life he will lead "after this bustle"—for does he not hold in his breast the King's written promise of safety? And when at last the warrant is before his eyes, and he knows that the mob outside clamours to see him led out to the block, he has no words of reproach; only he knows now how vain it is to trust in princes or the sons of men. Charles, stricken with terror and remorse, falls at his feet for pardon; and when the one, a woman, who had loved him so faithfully, rushes in to show him a way of escape, he yields at last only that he may so be spared to serve his King once more. Then, at last, he guesses her secret, and the wild hope of escape is his. "You love me, child!" he cries, and the door is flung open; there is the barge to bear him to safety, but Pym and his guards file in to destroy the one hope of escape. It is consistent with the spirit of the play that Pym should here vindicate his course. "England, have I done well?"—So he prefaces the speech in which he tells once more his old friendship and the bitterness of the fate which has driven him to the last step. And still Strafford thinks only of his King; and when he sees from Pym's inexorable face that even his life may not save the King's, he has but this to comfort him on his last dreadful journey, that at least he will die the first.

It may perhaps be felt that we have dealt unfairly with the Oxford Society in dealing with the play at such length that a comparatively short notice of the performance itself is alone possible. For this there are two good reasons. It would be certainly pleasant, but equally foolish, to presume that Browning's work is known to the immense audience to whom it ought to be familiar, and that time will, therefore, not have been wasted which, by however lengthy an analysis, claims for it further study. And having thus indicated the subtleties of the characters depicted, and the heavy demands made by the play on its interpreters, we have strengthened the force of the praise which is now to be accorded to the players. Having shown at some length the difficulties of the task, the high praise required by justice is more plainly implied. But it would be unfair to dismiss in a general word the three or four individual efforts which commended the work so warmly to the audiences which, for seven or eight days, have been occupied in its hearing. At the first performance, on the 12th inst., imperfections were, of course, noticeable. The minor characters were awkward and insincere, while Mr. Henry Irving, jun., as Strafford, showed an unpleasant degree of nervous restlessness. By the third night, however, these faults had largely disappeared, and of that performance criticism is offered. Let us speak first of the general, subsequently of particular, merits. To Mr. Alan Mackinnon, the stage-manager, the highest credit is due. All that could be done by careful forethought, aided by a keen appreciation of the dramatic exigencies of the piece, was done perfectly. The groupings were admirably arranged, and—to take a special instance—nothing could have

been more effective than the important scene in which the crowd of spectators watch the progress of the trial in the House of Lords. And Mr. Mackinnon is also entitled to commendation for his performance as the King, a part which he assumed on the night in question with considerable advantage to the play. He contrived to invest the part with no little dignity, and, at times, pathos—qualities wanting in its first interpreter. It may here be noted that a departure was made from the ordinary traditions—if the word be permissible in the case of a play which has been seen previously some six times only—in the Tower scene. It is perhaps fitting that Charles, disguised as an attendant, should accompany Hollis to the prisoner's cell, and be forced to witness the despair to which his perfidy has brought his servant; but obviously the situation demands singularly firm playing. The least weakness or hesitation would ruin it—and, on the first performance at Oxford, did nearly succeed in so doing. The gentleman who then played the King was disguised in ludicrously melodramatic fashion, and evidently felt his inability to grapple with the scene. For one moment, indeed, the splendid scene was in danger of complete failure, for the house roared with instant laughter when the King, in the clothes and attitude of a rakish Guy Fawkes, leaned helplessly against the wall. Acting, we believe on a happy suggestion of Mr. Cyril Hallward, this scene was rearranged by Mr. Mackinnon, the King making a more effective entry undisguised, and falling at Strafford's feet, when the latter, beholding the death-warrant, utters only his historic speech—

"Put not your trust  
In princes, neither in the sons of men,  
In whom is no salvation."

The ungracious part of the Queen was played cleverly by Miss Kate Behnke. Success, too, was earnestly sought and won by Lord Warkworth (Ch. Ch.) as Denzil Hollis, who played in the Tower scene with pathos; by P. Dearmer (Ch. Ch.) as Hampden; and in a larger measure by E. H. Clark (New), whose reading of the part of Pym was marked by breadth and strength. His last great speech was, in especial, given with the truest feeling. A further increase of excellence is to be recorded when we come to the Carlisle of Mrs. Charles Sim. This lady who, it will be remembered, played Calpurnia in last year's performance of "Julius Caesar," had perfectly understood the important part now allotted to her. The character, so far as the "love interest" is concerned, is not exactly new in literature. The tale of an unrequited love has been told before, but more subtle threads run across the character here shown. She renounces her attempts to win his love, for she knows that to make him disloyal is to mar his nobleness, and finds consolation in the thought of his unweakened greatness. If it may be permitted to drop for a moment the critical impersonality, one who knew something of the poet's intentions in the portrayal of Lady Carlisle would say that their interpretation by Mrs. Charles Sim was well nigh perfect in its insight and sympathy. Moreover, this lady possesses a splendid presence and singular dignity and repose of manner. What should be said, then, of Mr. Henry Irving, jun.? To the interpretation of his part he brought not only a knowledge of stage methods remarkable in so young a man, but a large and enviable share of those qualities which go to the making of a great actor. It would be foolish to say that his performance was entirely free from crudities or flaws, but it is certain that there are very few actors of far greater experience who could have presented so complete, so convincing, an interpretation. Not for a moment was he out of the part; and he was a palpable presence, even when absent from the stage. The nobility, the passionate devotion of the character, were revealed with absolute truth; every word rang with sincerity; and the pathos of the final scene, with its quick revulsions of emotion, was to the utmost degree strenuous and moving. It may seem an anti-climax, but the last thought concerning this remarkable performance is inevitably one of regret that Mr. Irving should refuse to enter a profession in which his father is so splendidly distinguished; for the wig and gown of the barrister will cover, we make bold to say, an actor of absolute greatness.

There is little need to add any sentence of general import, for it would only be possible to offer a variation of the verdict implied in what has gone before—that the Dramatic Society of Oxford have done well. They attempted a high thing, in which failure would scarcely have been remarkable. In that they have succeeded so admirably they have done more than prove their right to existence, for they have shown themselves worthy students of the great teacher who has scarcely left men any nobler lesson of the splendour of self-sacrifice and sincerity of heart and aim than that taught in the play of "Strafford."

## DRAMATIC EDUCATION.

BY HENRY ARTHUR JONES.

Dramatic Education! The term is likely to provoke a roar of antagonism and derision. Dramatic Education forsooth! "And pray would you include it with the elementary teaching of the board schools? Would you sandwich it between geography and arithmetic, and saddle the ratepayers with the cost of providing it? Or perhaps you would trust to voluntary effort, and enlist the services of stray curates with a taste for theatrical effect too strong to be satisfied with the ordinary ritual for the Church, and these, with the assured sympathies of the young ladies of the parish, shall be trusted with the missionary work of teaching the masses of a benighted nation their rudiments of histrionics!"

But it is not only the average British Philistine who receives the mention of dramatic education with a howl of contempt. The great body of the theatrical profession—actors, managers, and many even of those who write upon the stage and who have a real love for it—have nothing but impatience and irritation for anyone who ventures to use such a word as education in connection with the theatre. If one reminds them of the fact that every one of the great literary critics of our generation has spoken contemptuously of our modern drama as something not worth attention; if one points out that of the many successful entertainments of every year scarcely one is concerned with the primary business of the modern English stage, viz., that of rendering a faithful picture of modern English life; if one urges that the drama of our day is hopelessly entangled with all sorts of popular amusements that choke and smother it; if one asks what relation it holds to the general art of the country, to the professed religion of the country, to the literature of the country, to the great currents of national life, to the gigantic scientific movement of the last half-century, to the pressing social problems of the day, to the thoughts that are shaking mankind, to the new types of character developed by our civilization—if one bruits these questions, one is met by some such argument as that "Our Boys" ran fourteen hundred nights, that the last pantomime is wonderfully successful, and that the modern playwright may, if he is very lucky, and gives all his heart and brain to his work, make an income a quarter as large as that secured by hundreds of successful city merchants and speculators.

Now there is no doubt that our stage is improving, on the whole, that there is a growing audience for better kinds of work, and that an increasing number of people can find amusement in watching a play as a picture of the human life around them, rather than as a spectacle, an exhibition of clownery, or a series of sensational situations. But we are still very far from possessing a school of national drama. Consider the swarm of dramatists of the first rank among the Elizabethans! Consider the number of brilliant writers of Restoration comedy! How many French authors of the first rank have written plays for France during the last generation! But then a French playwright is a member of the French Academy; an English playwright is often only the servant of his actor-manager.

One of our best critics—Mr. William Archer—has lately told three English playwrights, whom he singled out from the rest, that the three of them, one on the top of the other, would not reach up to Meilhac's shoulders. But so far as natural ability goes, I think if Pinero stood upright and Grundy hopped on to his shoulders there would be no need of a third to overtop Meilhac. But let Mr. Archer remember the different dramatic education a French audience confers on its playwrights from that received by an English playwright from his audience. During the early nights of Dumas' play "Francillon" at the Français a year or two back I crushed into the second tier among a crowd of small tradesmen and the higher artisan class. The theatre was packed, and it was my only chance of seeing the piece. The play was intensely interesting and splendidly played. It is one of those curious problems in the ethics of adultery that the brilliant writer propounds every now and then to his countrymen—and never answers. But it contains some wonderfully written philosophy of Parisian life, and I was astonished and delighted to find from watching the faces of those around me (who were evidently quite of the lower middle classes) that they were as cordially enjoying this brilliant criticism of life as an English audience of the same class would have enjoyed seeing a low comedian sit upon a bandbox.



A few weeks ago I was speaking to the proprietor of the best hotel in a large country town not twenty miles from London—a man certainly superior in station and general education and knowledge of the world to my neighbours of the Théâtre Français—and the talk happening to turn upon theatres, he delivered himself as follows:—"Well, I have only been to the theatre once for the last twelve years, and that was the other day when I took my children to see Barnum!"

I did not reply.

Would it be unfair to generalise from the above particular instances as to the relative dramatic education of France and England? Doubtless there are numbers of people in France who have as vague an idea of the drama as my hotel-keeper, and there are assuredly numbers of appreciative theatre-goers of all classes in England: and yet I think a very good notion of the different attitude towards the drama of the great body of the middle classes in France, from the attitude of the great body of the middle classes in England, might be gained from the two experiences I have related.

It is the general average taste of the great mass of playgoers that directs the aims, and shapes the methods, and stamps the ideals of the playwright. He cannot be esoteric. And when a critic dwells upon the relative inferiority of English playwrights to their Gallic neighbours, one may be permitted to raise the further question: "Is it natural inborn infirmity, or does it come from bad training?" Every playwright, who hopes to be successful has to make it his business to watch his audience constantly and closely. He has to live in the theatre. His audiences drill him to their tastes. And who shall say what the present generation of English playwrights might have been if they had been trained by audiences like those I saw at the Théâtre Français witnessing "Francillon"—that is, by audiences who regard the drama as the *art of representing human life*, and not the art of sitting upon band-boxes; or the art of dressing ballet girls in coloured satin, and marching them in gorgeous processions; or of manufacturing elaborate chains of circumstantial evidence against innocent people; or the art of singing topical music hall songs, or any of the other curious exhibitions that the average British mind is apt to lump together under the general heading of theatres.

I have lately been called to account for saying that to get good plays the English public has only to demand them. I must repeat this heresy, if heresy it is. How can one doubt that the Victorian age, which has thrown off such a great literature, which has been imperial in science, and far more than respectable in painting and music, which has shown the most supreme and varied intellectual activity—how can one doubt that the ability to produce a national drama has not somewhere lain latent in it, if only the right means had been used for developing it? But while the drama is confused with all sorts of childish amusement; while the big general theatre-going public look upon the stage merely as a means of escape from thought, a shuffling off of all kind of mental exertion, and is careless whether this vacuity is brought about by spectacle, by horse-play, by pantomime, by sensation, or by scenic effect, so long only as the desired poultice of forgetfulness is applied to the jaded mind, and the depth of inanity in the entertainment responds to the depth of inanity in the brain of the listener—while these things prevail, and the greatest prizes are often to be won on the lower levels, it is almost impossible for individual playwrights to break away from the general average tastes and ideas, and to lay the foundations of a national school of English drama worthy of taking its place among the sister arts of poetry, literature, painting, and music. What an advantage the art of music has over the drama in the fact that every girl is trained for years to practise the best composers, and that there is in every town in England a large and cultivated body of amateur talent. How much the theatre suffers from the absence of such centres of cultivated dramatic opinion! Our amateur dramatic clubs usually play outworn farces and feeble dramas of the day before yesterday, quite lifeless and inoperative.

Again, almost every theatre is dependent upon advertising, and tricks of advertising, and often a huge dramatic success is built upon the same foundation as the fortunes of a patent pill. Here again we are quite in the hands of the public. It must be a curious order of mind that is allured by the ordinary pictorial representation on the walls of scenes from our popular plays. And yet the treasury of a theatre gives instant proof of their overwhelming attraction to the average theatre-goer.

It is not possible that there can be any sudden and immediate change of popular taste, but there is growing up amongst us a real desire to see the drama take its place as a national art, a desire to know and admire the

best, a willingness to be guided to that best, and a readiness to make some effort to understand it.

And we may implore of those who influence popular opinion and whose verdicts tend to shape dramatic taste:—"Deliver us from bunkum! Take us out of the realm of Pears' Soap and Beecham's Pills! Save us from the necessity of bawling louder than the most brazen-throated of our neighbours on pain of instant annihilation! Give the author some authority over his audience! And drive home to the average man in the pit the fact that the theatre is not the equivalent of the penny show of his childhood's days, but the place where the deepest truths and experiences of human life should pass before him."

## THE DRAMATISTS.

### XXIV.—LOPE DE VEGA.—"NEW ART OF MAKING COMEDIES."

These rules for the dramatist, laid down in 1609 by Lope de Vega, are called "New" to distinguish them from the old laws—of the Unities and the like—which were held to govern the classic stage. The first part of the little treatise—which is in irregular verse—is an ironical apology for the romantic drama, and, now that classicism is happily interred, may be disregarded; but the Rules which our author lays down are for the most part still as true as when they were written.

Rule the First is, however, no longer needed, for it is merely a permission to include kings among the personages of your plays.

Rule the Second defends the mingling of comedy and tragedy. Such variety is pleasant: moreover, we find it in nature, whose beauty often rises from such contrasts.

Rule the Third is of high value. "Take care that your subject represents one action only: take care that your story be not overcharged with episodes—that is to say with events which do not carry on the principal subject—and that there is no part which can be taken away without bringing down the entire edifice. As for restricting the whole action to one day, don't trouble about it . . . you may be content with keeping it within as short a time as possible . . . and let the intervals of time occur between the acts."

Rule the Fourth bids you to "write your piece first in prose and divide it into three acts"—(this is certainly the most logical and symmetrical form, for comedy especially)—and, if possible, to confine each act to the events of one day.

Lope mentions that it used to be the fashion—as now in Japan—to play in the intervals between the acts three little interludes, but that in 1609 one at most was played, and it was immediately followed by a dance.

Rule the Fifth. The plot being divided into two parts—two "subjects," to use the musical term—let them be well connected with each other from the beginning and until the end; and do not let the *dénouement* be evident until the last scene—"for when the spectators foresee the end they turn their faces to the door and their backs to the actors."

Rule the Sixth. Very seldom let the stage be empty. (This rule is very carefully observed nowadays. Shakespeare marked the end of a scene by the exit of all the characters.)

Rule the Seventh. "Now begin to put your play into verse. Let your style be always chaste, and use neither brilliant thoughts nor flashes of wit when you are treating of ordinary matters. . . . but when you bring upon the scene a person who exhorts or counsels, you may allow yourself finer phrases and more thrilling expressions; and in this you will only imitate nature."

Rule the Eighth counsels you not to quote scripture, nor to use affected or pedantic language.

Rule the Ninth bids your kings, old men, lovers, to speak with appropriate dignity, gravity, and fire, and points out that in soliloquies the speaker's entire style should be changed. It adds that female characters should always behave with becoming decency, and that when they assume male disguises—"which always please the public"—it should invariably be for a sufficient reason.

Rule the Tenth. That your comic servant should not treat of too elevated subjects, nor be over-witty.

Rule the Eleventh. That your personages should never act inconsistently with their characters, nor forget what they have themselves said.

Rule the Twelfth. "Point the end of each scene with some telling phrase, or pleasantry, or polished verse, that the actor, as he goes out, may not leave the audience in an ill-humour."

Rule the Thirteenth. "Let your first act contain the exposition of your plot; in the second, knit together your intrigue, and so work it out that until the middle of the third no one can foresee the *dénouement*." (It is this plan which makes a three-act play the most symmetrical, as aforesaid). "Always cheat the curiosity of the spectator by indicating as possible a result quite different from that which the events seem to prefigure."

Rule the Fourteenth, and last. "Appropriate with taste your versification to the subject of which you are treating." (The special directions given on this point apply to the different forms of Spanish verse, and may be said to lack "actuality" at the present moment.)

But there are few of these rules which it would not be worth the while of our coming dramatists to study; nor are the most obvious by any means the least deserving of attention. Even the "rule of the two subjects" holds good still in the majority of plays, though simplicity of structure is now gaining ground—sometimes pure simplicity, and sometimes what one may call the complex simplicity of an organism of very high order.

### THE ROYAL INSTITUTION.

Canon Ainger had a large and appreciative audience on the 14th inst., when he commenced a series of three lectures on "The Three Stages of Shakspeare's Art." Opening his paper with the remark that the man who wrote on Shakspeare did so with a hundred daggers at his throat, the Canon said that as his object was merely to consider and inquire into the nature and causes of some of the differences which existed in the poet's plays, he hoped to escape that hostile criticism and "*odium Shaksperianum*" which, in his opinion, exceeded in vehemence even the *odium theologicum*. Some good-naturedly satirical remarks were then made concerning the supposed intimate acquaintance of the cultured with Shakspeare's works, a belief, however, difficult to reconcile with the interest displayed by audiences in the production of his plays on the stage, and with remarks sometimes overheard as to the ultimate fate of the hero or heroine. As a matter of fact Shakspeare's writings and quotations from them had become so absorbed into our language that it was quite possible to know very much concerning his plays without ever having read a line of them. Canon Ainger then dwelt on the strong dramatic element in the plays and their eminent adaptability to stage requirements. He considered that a play which would not act on the stage would not charm in the study, and emphasized his opinion by quoting the remark of the cynical gentleman in the story, "as a batter pudding it is excellent, but as a *soufflé* it is absurd."

The plays were divided into three groups, which the Canon gracefully termed the Spring, Summer, and Autumn of Shakspeare's art. In the "spring" section was placed "Love's Labour Lost," "Romeo and Juliet," and "Henry IV., Parts I. and II.," all produced between 1591 and 1598; the "summer" collection comprised "As You Like It," "Hamlet," and "Othello," written between 1598 and 1605; and under "autumn" was placed "Timon of Athens," "Winter's Tale," and the "Tempest," 1605 to 1612. "Love's Labour Lost" was shown to be a keen satire on the Euphuistic school developed by John Lyly, the fashionable comedy writer before Shakspeare commenced. Shakspeare might be said never to have thought of posthumous fame, but wrote for immediate success, and thus paid no heed to the fact that ridicule of a fashion, however clever, often proved as ephemeral as the fashion itself. Canon Ainger did not think, however, that it was wholly to this that the play was so comparatively little known: the language of all the characters was largely permeated with Euphuistic phrases which, combined with a superabundance of imagery and prodigality of poetical ideas, made the play move heavily to modern minds, although in plot and development it was one of the most clever and charming. In "Romeo and Juliet" the exuberance referred to was more subdued, and it was interesting to notice in this play how the rhyme was abandoned as passion was developed, and the poet more fully entered into the emotions and aspirations of his characters, as in Act II. Scene II. Turning to "Henry IV.," Canon Ainger dwelt on the immense superiority of Shakspeare's prose over that of Marlow, Green, and Peel, and showed that whereas in the plays of these poets the minor characters never rose above that of buffoons, and were introduced in the same way as the "corner men" at Christy Minstrels, merely to exchange repartees, those of Shakspeare possessed a distinct individuality, and were dramatically connected with the plot, in illustration of which the Canon

read some scenes between Sir John Falstaff, Mrs. Quickly, and Bardolph. These were given with such keen appreciation of dramatic character, and so much elocutionary skill as to arouse the warmest manifestations of approval, and bring an interesting discourse to a most effective conclusion.

G. W.

### NOTES AND NEWS.

"A Midsummer Night's Dream," at the Globe, with all its imperfections on its head, is still the most charming entertainment in London, and the management deserve well of the public for an attempt—on however small a scale—to break up the long-run system. Unluckily the public is easily puzzled, and chooses to think that because the "Taming of the Shrew" is played on Thursdays and Fridays, the "Midsummer Night's Dream" is not played at all. When "Hamlet" is added to the list—as it will be on Saturday of next week—their bewilderment will be complete. It is only, at present, Mr. Irving who can safely vary his programme in this way.

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On Monday there were two alterations in the chief people of the fairy comedy, though one—we will hope, as the cause was the ill-health of an excellent actor—was only temporary. This latter was the substitution for Mr. G. R. Weir of Mr. Athol Forde as Bottom. The new actor jarred less with the tone of the fairy play in the early scenes than his predecessor, but seemed somewhat lacking in humour; however, he improved greatly when he donned the ass's head. The other change was the assumption by Miss Dorothy Dene of Miss Kate Rorke's part, Helena. The loss of Miss Rorke means the loss of Miss Rorke's delightful personality; but, honestly, the lines seemed to us to be better delivered—held with a firmer grasp, spoken with more variety—by her successor. At the outset Miss Dene was altogether too slow; but she improved as she went on, and, on the whole, played the part admirably—it was a lesson in elocution which many of her colleagues would do well to study. The fairy scenes, now that they work with a smoothness hardly to be expected on the first night, are altogether things of beauty, joys which do not pall, but gain on repetition. The music, the fitting fairies, the glamour of the woodland night—they are a dream indeed. Mr. Benson, we are your very grateful humble servants.

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The starting of a provincial company to play "The Middleman" in all the chief towns—to be followed immediately by another company for the secondary towns—has deprived the Shaftesbury Theatre of one of the quartette of pretty girls, which was not the least of its attractions. Miss Agnes Verity, who played a small part charmingly, goes on tour for the heroine, Mary Blenkarn. We may note that Miss Maud Millett—a little nervous on the first night—now seems thoroughly at home in strong drama and a big theatre: her performance, always sweet and sympathetic, is now one of singular charm. Pathos so exquisite and so unforced, refinement and simplicity so genuine, are rare even on the stage of to-day.

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In other respects Mr. Jones's splendid play—beyond any question the best he has written—has gained greatly, by firmer and closer acting, since the first night. Mr. Willard, indeed, has shown how thorough an artist he is by not attempting too much to improve his performance: it did not need elaboration, nor, indeed, alteration, and he has shown his judgment in that he has not spoilt a wellnigh perfect piece of work. Mr. Mackintosh plays Chandler more sharply and brightly than at first; it is wonderful what humanity he gets into an unsympathetic character. The rest are, individually, much as they were—and that is, on the whole, excellent—but they play better together. Let us note, though, the great improvement of a young actor of much promise, Mr. Esmond, in the trying part of a "bold bad lover" who is not bold.

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On Friday ends Mrs. Beere's splendid "Tosca," and she takes a rest under sunnier skies. On Saturday commences "A Pair of Spectacles," from the French by Mr. Grundy. This, we hear on excellent authority, is not a farcical play, as its title and certain paragraphs would lead us to believe. Miss Kate Rorke returns to the Garrick for it, and Mr. Hare makes a welcome reappearance. There is, unfortunately, no part for Mr. Forbes Robertson, who sets a good example to "leading men" by appearing in the first piece—Mr. Wynn Miller's "Dream Faces."



On Monday Mrs. Langtry—happily recovered—will open the St. James's Theatre with "As You Like It."

Students of the Dutch drama will be interested in the first publication of a new series of Dutch classics, which has just appeared ("Bibliotheek van Nederlandsche Letterkunde"). This is the "Jephtha" of Vondel, a tragedy after the "classic"—or French—style, written (we are told by those who know) in the purest and most elegant Dutch. What that is like we may learn when Mr. Willard brings over the "Fabriksbass"—which we know as the "Middleman"—to show us how they do these things in Holland.

A matinée of a new piece, called "The Home Feud," by Mr. Frith—son of the famous Academician—was but moderately successful on Thursday week; while the new piece—"My Brother's Sister"—produced on Saturday afternoon at the Gaiety by Miss Minnie Palmer, may be sufficiently described by the statement that it was of the Minnie Palmer school. In other words, it totally eludes criticism; but a young Mr. Sparling made a hit in it. Thirdly, a new play with the old title "Quicksands"—adapted from a novel by Miss Charlotte Morland—failed at the Comedy, on Tuesday, by reason of an altogether unsympathetic plot.

### GOETZ'S "WATER-LILY" AT BECKENHAM.

(BY A VERY OCCASIONAL CORRESPONDENT.)

The first performance in England, as far as we are aware, of Hermann Goetz's "Water-lily" was given by Mr. F. W. Partridge's Select Choir at Beckenham on the 13th inst. It will be remembered that this work was announced for performance by the Novello Choir in 1886, but had to be abandoned at the last moment on account of the great difficulty of the music, to study which insufficient time had been allowed. "The Water-lily" is written for tenor solo, double male chorus, and orchestra, and is undoubtedly one of Goetz's most finished and poetic works. The poem is one of those essentially German romantic effusions in which all objects in nature, the trees and the lake, the mountains, and even the moon become gifted with speech and swayed by essentially human emotions. That Goetz was in sympathy with such poetry is evident from the score of the "Water-lily," which from the first bar to the last is the work of an artist who has entered into the very spirit of the poem, and whose genius has thereby been stirred to give forth its finest fruit. We have no hesitation in placing the "Water-lily" on a level with the lovely Symphony in F and the 137th Psalm, which hitherto have been considered Goetz's best works; in some respects, indeed, we are inclined to prefer it to the Psalm, which it surpasses in spontaneity, breadth, freedom, and excellence of workmanship, and in the beautiful romantic atmosphere which pervades its every bar. The work opens, *Lento e Sognando*, with a suavely melodious and beautifully harmonised chorus above an accompaniment whose dreamy undulating movement is suggestive of the element referred to in the opening lines, "In evening stillness lies the lake." After a short tenor solo, a charming piece of what for want of a better name we may call "water music," a fine climax *ff* is reached at a reference to the "spectre-like mountains" which "tower in pride." The tempo quickens and the character of the music changes completely but appropriately, and without losing in interest after this; but it is not until we reach the next chorus (*vivace e tempestoso*), "But hark! with fury the forest shakes," that the composer puts forth his full strength. The voices are divided into two choirs, which are handled with much boldness and force, and so as to produce some fine, massive, antiphonal effects, while the persistent repetition of short, fierce phrases and rushing semiquaver passages in the elaborate accompaniment add greatly to the picturesqueness and dramatic significance. After working up to a powerful climax the music diminishes in force, and we arrive at the most poetic part of the work. In solemn and touching unison passages the voices give eloquent expression to the grief of forest, lake, and "the red glowing moon" over the fate of the "Water-lily." Another short but beautiful tenor solo, during which the chorus repeat *pp* their wailing unison passages, brings us back to the music used in the opening chorus, and the work ends as poetically as it began with a repetition of the undulating movement referred to above, suggesting that once more "in evening stillness lies the lake and mirrors the waning glow of the west." Taking the difficulty of the work into consideration, the perform-

ance (without orchestra) of Goetz's fine work by Mr. Partridge's small but capable choir deserves to be praised for its general accuracy and, what is much rarer in choir singing, the intelligent appreciation of the dramatic character of the music, which showed that it had been rehearsed with much care. The rest of the programme calls for no detailed remark.

### CONCERTS.

At the Crystal Palace concert on Saturday afternoon Miss Fanny Davies played a pianoforte concerto in D by J. Rosenhain. This composer, who enjoyed at one time considerable reputation as a pianist, is now in his 80th year, and resides at Baden Baden. He has written operas, symphonies, chamber music, pianoforte pieces. He came to London in 1837, and played at one of our Philharmonic concerts, and in 1854 the same society produced his Symphony in F minor (Op. 43). His opera, "Le Démon de la Nuit," brought out at Paris in 1851, is said to have had a brilliant success. It would, perhaps, not be fair to judge of Rosenhain as a composer from this pianoforte concerto, which was probably written many years ago, when the influence of Hummel, Moscheles, and Mendelssohn was at its zenith. The music is graceful and cleverly written; from a *virtuoso* point of view it is certainly attractive. Miss Davies gave an admirably neat and spirited rendering of the work, and was much applauded. There is nothing new to say about Mendelssohn's "Scotch" symphony, and yet it would scarcely be right to allow the magnificent performance under Mr. Manns' direction to pass without recognition. The Crystal Palace concert room is the special home of Mendelssohn; nowhere, perhaps, is greater justice done to his works than here. Mdlle. Amelia Sinico made a favourable *début* as vocalist. She has a pleasing voice, and sings intelligently. She was, however, nervous, and unable to do herself proper justice. The programme included the "Egmont" overture, Sullivan's "Overture di Ballo," and pianoforte solos.

Mr. Johann Kruse led the Quartet at the Popular Concert last Saturday, the work given being Mozart's in E flat, No. 4, more rarely heard than some of its companions. Mr. Kruse's intonation is certainly surer than it was on his former appearances at these concerts, though further improvement in this direction is still desirable; nevertheless his energetic style and thorough intellectual mastery of his subject stamp him an artist of high order. In Schumann's A minor Sonata, in which he was associated with Mdlle. Janotha, he was heard to greater advantage than in the Quartet, and it is not everyone of such responsiveness (to borrow an expression of Mrs. Humphrey Ward's) who would have the tact and self-control to avoid ranting in this passion-stirring work. Mdlle. Janotha, too, proved his worthy associate, and her accompaniment of Brahms' Gipsy Songs (given for the last time this season and by the same quartet of vocalists as on the previous occasion) was a particularly graceful and finished performance. Her solo was the Sonata Appassionata, of which the reading was rather conventional and unsympathetic. An encore, however, was insisted on, and the audience was treated to the variations on "Rule Britannia," rather a favourite of hers.

On Monday the usual crowd assembled to welcome Herr Joachim, who speedily showed how justifiable was the enthusiasm which his appearance had called forth. We do not indeed remember to have heard the famous "Rasoumowski in C" played with so much fire and delicacy even by the distinguished quartet of artists who, on this, as on so many previous occasions, were its exponents. The delightful quartet in C, op. 33, by Haydn, was also given with an absolutely perfect apprehension of the composer's style and meaning. There were many who regretted that the great violinist should have chosen as his solo Bach's "Chaconne," which, some think, he has made too familiar. It may be admitted that Herr Joachim's *répertoire* would bear extension; but, as regards this wonderful work, allowance must be made for the fact that few other players are able to meet its exactions without turning it into a mere display of mechanical dexterity. So remarkable and instructive a reading as he is able to give will surely bear repetition once or twice a year. Miss Agnes Zimmermann, who is always heard at her best in Scarlatti, gave three pieces of the bright old master with infinite charm.

The Greatest of all Pianofortes. THE STEINWAY PIANOFORTES. New York & London.  
The Greatest of all Pianofortes. THE STEINWAY PIANOFORTES. New York & London.  
The Greatest of all Pianofortes. THE STEINWAY PIANOFORTES. New York & London.

of touch, and Miss Liza Lehmann delighted everyone by her finished singing of the quaint *agrément* of an old French song "Le Portrait." We regret to say that Herr Joachim, Miss Zimmermann and Miss Lehmann were each guilty of granting an encore. Herr Frantzen accompanied.

Several new compositions of more than ordinary interest and merit were produced at the fifty-third performance given by the Musical Artists' Society at Princes' Hall on the 15th inst. Most worthy of mention is a Duo Concertant, for two pianos, by the well known musician Mr. Charles Stephens, admirably played by Mrs. Emily Laurence and the composer. The work, which is in three movements, is throughout extremely bright and effective, and displays a genial and fertile invention, enhanced by experienced and thorough musicianship, and is to be regarded as a valuable addition to the somewhat limited *répertoire* of this style of music. Next in order of merit must be mentioned a Trio in G, for violin, violoncello, and pianoforte, by Miss Rosalind F. Ellicott—a graceful and refined work, cleverly put together, although capable of improvement in several details. As in the former work the piano part was skilfully played by the composer, assisted in this instance by Mr. Buziau and Mr. B. Albert, two veterans from whom Miss Ellicott's music met with full justice. Three duets, "Evening Song," "A Dirge for Summer," and "Piping Down the Valleys," by Mr. B. Luard Selby, proved most charming compositions of great artistic value, and fully merited the warm applause which followed their admirable interpretation by Mrs. Campbell Perugini and Miss Mary Hutton. Two other clever and graceful songs, "Und Wästen's die Blumen" and "Der Herbstwind" were contributed by the pen of Miss Ethel Boyce, and expressively sung by Miss Mary Hutton. Other items worthy of mention were an expressive "Romance for Violin," by Mr. Charles A. Trew, well played by Mons. Rene Ortmans, and a brilliant and florid Suite in F for two pianofortes by Mr. Algernon Ashton, which latter work brought the concert to an effective conclusion. The society is doing good work by bringing such worthy compositions into notice, but the practice of rigidly demanding all great coats from the audience and refusing restitution under payment of sixpence is not calculated to increase its popularity.

Mr. William Nicholl and Miss Marguerite Hall gave, on Tuesday afternoon last, the first of their series of vocal recitals. There is no need to insist upon the honourable positions held in the musical world by these artists, who have won for themselves reputations of the most enviable kind. Each is known as a singer of excellent physical endowments and refined and cultivated sympathies. These qualities were once again conspicuous on Tuesday, when a programme of considerable interest was presented. Miss Hall scored her chief successes in Handel's "Lusinghe piu care," Fauré's "Les Roses d'Ispahan," the setting by Mr. Henschel of "My love is like a red, red rose," and Mary Carmichael's graceful song, "To Sappho." Mr. Nicholl introduced with effect a new sacred song by Dr. F. E. Gladstone, "Salvator Mundi," while amongst his happiest efforts must be placed a rendering of a charming "Ständchen" by Mr. Duvivier. The two joined in various duets, and on the performances of each artist identical praise is to be bestowed for the refinement and variety of their respective styles and methods. The recital, indeed, offered an unhappily rare instance of absolutely artistic singing. It should be added that M. Tivadar Nachez played violin solos, giving, *inter alia*, a singularly affected reading of Ernst's well-known "Elegie."

An interesting and varied programme was put forward by the Royal Amateur Orchestral Society at their smoking concert at the Princes' Hall on Tuesday. Composers so widely different in style as Sterndale Bennett, Wagner, and Delibes were represented by the "Naiads" overture, the prelude to "Tristan and Isolde," and the ballet music "La Source." These difficult pieces were given with admirable spirit and understanding by Mr. Mount's orchestra, the fine tone and intelligent phrasing of the "strings" being particularly praiseworthy. The solo violinist was Mr. Johannes Wolff, who was heard in Vieuxtemps' hackneyed *Réverie*, a Habanera from his own pen, and pieces by Godard and Moskowski. Mr. Wolff is undoubtedly a player of exceptional ability, but we would earnestly warn him against the tendency to exaggeration, which, though it may find favour with the unthinking, must displease all serious lovers of art. Mr. Lawrence Kellie, who is of the "intense" school of singing now so much in vogue, was the vocalist. The numerous and distinguished audience included H.R.H. the Prince of Wales.

The Stock Exchange Orchestral Society and Male-Voice Choir gave their second concert of the season at St. James's Hall on the 18th February before a large and warmly-appreciative audience. The acknowledged admirable qualities of the orchestra, under the able conductorship of Mr. George Kitchin, were heard to advantage in the "Leonore" overture, No. 3, Haydn's Symphony in G (Letter V.), and MacCunn's "Land of the Mountain and the Flood." The selection of Chevalier L. E. Bach, who was the pianist of the evening, consisted of a charmingly-scored Romanze from a Concerto of his own, and Liszt's Hungarian Fantasia. To say that the performance of such a varied programme was more than satisfactory, even almost irreproachable, is the highest praise that can be accorded. The Chevalier Bach gave an almost too polished and elegant reading of the semi-barbaric fantasia—we prefer Bulow's bolder conception. He, however, took the audience—who, after six recalls, would scarcely understand that he declined an encore—completely by storm. The choir was heard in a short Cantata by Mr. J. F. H. Read, entitled "In the Forest," a musicianly little work, as graceful as it is unpretending. The composer, who is also a member of the orchestra, came down from his seat to bow his acknowledgment of the applause that was certainly well earned. The solo part was carefully rendered by Mr. W. G. Forington. Mdlle. Chéron revealed considerable intelligence and facility in the Jewel Song from "Faust" and Tosti's "Venetian Song," and Mr. Hadrill is an exceptionally good accompanist. Two familiar part songs, in which some impressive *pianissimos* were attained, were given with an artistic finish which deserved a better fate than that which awaited them—the honour of playing an impatient audience out.

Mr. Bond Andrews, who has lately been honoured with a commission from the Carl Rosa Company to write their new English comedy opera, gave a successful concert at the residence of Mr. B. Lucas (Earl's Court) on Saturday, 15th instant, at which, amongst others, Mdlle. Pauline Featherby, Miss Gough, Mrs. Carmell, Miss Nellie Levey (guitar), Mr. Neville Doone, Mr. Franklin Clive, Mr. T. C. Ward (concertina), Herr Poznanski (violin), and Mr. George Capel (recitations) appeared. Several numbers of the programme were encores, including Miss McKrill's song "In fairy glen," Madame Pauline Featherby's song, "Sweet land of dreams" (both from Mr. Bond Andrews's pen), a fine performance by Herr Poznanski of his new Cavatina for violin, a charming Spanish ballad sung by Miss Nellie Levey, with guitar accompaniment, Mr. George Capel's selections, and Mr. Bond Andrews's solos on the piano. Judging from one or two numbers which were given from Mr. Andrews's new opera at this concert, we believe connoisseurs may look forward to the early production of a highly-interesting musical work. There are originality and melody in his writing, and he possesses in a marked degree the power to imitate our national music especially as exemplified in our dance melodies.

A concert was given on Monday evening at Princes' Hall in aid of the Catholic poor of Westminster. A long and interesting programme was presented, although three artists announced were unable to appear—these being Mdlle. Clara Samuël, Mr. Henry Piercy, and Mr. Harper Kearton. The audience were well satisfied, however, for they were entertained right well by Miss Agnes Janson, whose rich voice and admirably expressive style lend all possible charm to her Swedish songs; by Mr. Arthur Oswald, who sang with his accustomed effect a pretty new song by Hope Temple, "Is it Fate?"; and by Mr. William Nicholl, who, as substitute for Mr. Piercy, gave "Kathleen Mavourneen" with perfect expression, his *mezza voce* effects being particularly good. M. Tivadar Nachez played in more adequate fashion than usual Ernst's "Elegie," and his own Hungarian dances. A pleasing relief was afforded by Mr. Kirwan's recitations, which included an amusing extract from Thackeray, given with much unction.

The *soirée musicale* of the Meistersingers' Club on Tuesday was attended by a large and fashionable audience. Signor Albeniz and M. Tivadar Nachez played pieces on the piano and violin respectively, by Chopin, Weber, Ernst, and Moskowski; and Miss Kate Flinn, Miss Clara Myers, Madame Martinez and Mr. Avon Saxon sang songs by Beignani, Gounod, Venzano, and Talbot. Mr. Raphael Roche accompanied. The spring series of arrangements includes—by permission of Mr. R. D'Oyley Carte—two performances of the "Pirates of Penzance" by the Meistersingers' choir and orchestra under the direction of Mr. Norfolk Megone.



The Royal Choral Society gave, on Wednesday, one of their familiarly excellent performances of Gounod's "Redemption." There is no need to tell with what adequacy Mr. Barnby's choristers were accustomed to interpret this work, and we shall only single out, as an instance of special merit, the "Reproaches" chorus, which was splendidly rendered. Of the soloists it may be said that Mr. Iver McKay and Madame Belle Cole especially distinguished themselves, the gentleman singing with admirable purity of style and beauty of voice, while the American contralto's rich and sympathetic organ did more than justice to her music. Mr. Watkin Mills and Mr. Henry Pope were, as usual, satisfactory, but Madame Dotti's voice is scarcely rich or powerful enough for the work. Miss Ruth Elvidge assisted satisfactorily in the trios.

Miss Grace Woodward, a young singer favourably known in London concert rooms, gave a highly successful concert at the Highbury Athenæum on the evening of Saturday last, when she was assisted in the execution of an interesting programme by Madame Clara Samuëll, Mr. Laurence Kellie, Mr. Isidore de Lara, and M. Tivadar Nachez. The concert-giver's agreeable voice and sympathetic style were heard to the greatest advantage in Mrs. Moncrieff's song, "Unrevealed," Arthur Hervey's "Maid of Araby," and a very graceful new song by Otto Cantor, "At the Dawn." In all these the excellent qualities indicated were very apparent, and the audience received Miss Woodward's performances with great applause. The other artists named were also successful, and a word of praise should also be accorded to the pianoforte solos of Mrs. Watson.

Mr. Frank Silvester's operetta, "Who Stole the Tarts," was produced with great *eclat* at St. Alban's Town Hall on Saturday afternoon last, and again on Monday evening in aid of the Public Library, Lecture, and Book Fund, the spacious room being well filled at both performances. The music was arranged by Mrs. T. G. Page, from old English airs and nursery rhymes, to which the author had written most appropriate words. The performance was heartily applauded, and, indeed, all who took part, including Miss Phillips, Miss Silvester, Miss Morrish, and Mr. Elan, deserved high credit for their efforts.

## PROVINCIAL.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS.)

BRIGHTON.—On Thursday evening, Feb. 13, the Brighton and Hove Choral and Orchestral Society gave a complimentary benefit concert to its honorary conductor, Dr. Frank J. Sawyer. The Dome, Royal Pavilion, was crowded to excess. Sir A. Sullivan's "Golden Legend" was most satisfactorily performed, both soloists, chorus, and band doing full justice to the popular work. Dr. Bridge, of Westminster, played an organ solo with his customary skill, and also conducted his fine overture, "Morte d'Arthur." It is to be hoped that Dr. Sawyer will be the recipient of a very handsome reward for his past seven years' labours in the cause of music in Brighton, as, during the time he has conducted the society (of which he was the principal promoter), such works as Dvorák's "Stabat Mater," "Spectre's Bride," Corder's "Bridal of Triermain," Bridge's "Callirhoe," works by Brahms, Goetz, Stanford, Gade, and Max Bruch, besides numerous compositions by the old masters, have been presented, most of them for the first time in the town, and performed most creditably. On Saturday afternoon the last of a series of three chamber concerts was given by Miss Kuhe and Mr. Leo Stern. Despite the inclemency of the weather a large audience assembled. Haydn's quartett in D minor (op. 76, No. 2) was well rendered by Messrs. Wolff, G. W. Collins, Channell, and Stern. Miss Kuhe and Mr. Wolff were most successful in Rubinstein's Sonata in A minor (op. 19) for piano and violin, the talented executants showing themselves in good form, although they had both recently been seriously indisposed. Mr. Wolff received unanimous applause for his splendid rendering of Stern's "Chanson d'Amour" and Wienawski's "Caprice Valse," and in response to a recall gave Raff's "Cavatina." Perhaps the most interesting item was Dvorák's Quintett in A (Op. 81), in which all the above-mentioned artists took part. The charming work was played exceedingly well, and fully appreciated. Miss Agnes Janson contributed some vocal items with marked ability, displaying her sweet voice and pleasing vocalisation to

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great advantage. The accomplished artist had the privilege of being accompanied by Mr. W. Kuhe.

**BRISTOL.**—The first Saturday Popular Concert since Christmas, which took place this day week, was attended by a crowded audience. Madame Lori Recoschewitz, who took part in the representation of "Lohengrin" in this city in the autumn of last year, came again and gave general delight by her singing of some ballads and selections from oratorios, displaying excellent capabilities in this department of music, to which she is now turning her attention from opera, in which she has gained a high reputation. Eos Morlais, the Welsh tenor, was the other vocalist, and he, too, met with success. The assemblage were especially pleased with the whistling of Mr. Charles Capper. The choir crisply sang a number of tune-ful choruses and part songs, and the band played popular selections. The Monday Popular Concert Society is meeting with great success. The number of guarantors is now 600, and the booking of seats for the first concert on Monday is very satisfactory.

**BIRMINGHAM, FEBRUARY 17.**—The Birmingham Festival Choral Society gave a miscellaneous concert instead of a choral work with orchestral accompaniments, thus deviating entirely from the usual path, and depriving the subscribers and the general public of the only means of hearing a complete choral work rendered in an adequate manner. That the proceeding was not judicious may be gathered from the poor attendance, although the concert was attractive enough, consisting of part songs, madrigals, and choruses, given by the full choir of the society with marked finish, delightful graduation of tone, and superb *ensemble*. The principal vocalists—Miss Fanny Moody, Miss Lily Moody, Mr. John Child, and Mr. Charles Manners—were received most enthusiastically, and their singing in the garden scene from "Faust," which took up the whole of the second part of the concert, was delightful in the extreme. Mr. Stockley conducted the choral items in his usual skilful manner. The North Midland section of the National Society of Professional Musicians gave a musical *matinée* at Derby on Saturday, at which his Worship the Mayor of Derby presided. The programme consisted entirely of compositions by members of the society, including the two prize compositions awarded to Dr. Stokes for a pianoforte and violin sonata and a song by W. Noel Johnson with a violoncello obligato. There was a large attendance notwithstanding the wretched weather which prevailed on Saturday.

**MANCHESTER.**—Mendelssohn's "Elijah" was given at Sir Charles Hallé's sixteenth concert on the 13th inst., the principals being Miss Annie Marriott, Madame Hope Glenn, Mr. McGuckin, and Mr. Andrew Black. The performance was highly successful in every respect, but was chiefly remarkable for the splendid chorus singing, and Mr. Black's interpretation of the music allotted to "Elijah." There was a large and enthusiastic audience. On the 17th inst. Sir Charles Hallé gave his sixth pianoforte recital in connection with the Gentlemen's Concerts, the works selected being by Beethoven and contemporary composers. The indefatigable Czerny headed the list with three melodious and effective pieces selected from his Op. 692, which clearly showed that if—instead of nearly a thousand scholastic works—he had written less and with higher aims he might have enriched pianoforte music with works of real artistic value. The remaining pieces were three Studies, Op. 70, by Moscheles, Schubert's Sonata in A minor, Op. 42; Beethoven's Sonata Appassionata in F minor, Sonata, with fugue, in A flat, and six of the Bagatelles. These standard works are all well known, and though Sir Charles introduced no startling or new interpretation, his playing throughout was marked by a perfection of ease and artistic finish begotten of an almost lifelong acquaintance with them.

**GLASGOW.**—So far as choral and orchestral concerts on a large scale are concerned, the musical season in Glasgow is practically over. Mr. Manns and the London contingent of our regular orchestra have returned south. The only choral concert of special importance which is announced takes place on the 4th of March, on which occasion the Choral Union, with a selected orchestra of local instrumentalists, will perform Corder's Cantata, "The Sword of Argantyr," and a new choral ballad by W. Edmondstone Duncan, a young Scotch composer. During the last fortnight, however, two concerts of some importance have been given in our largest hall, one by Marie Roze and a touring party of vocalists, and the other by Herr Stavenhagen. The first of these concerts was very poorly attended, and must have been a failure, while at Herr Stavenhagen's recital the hall was crowded with a brilliant audience, numbering nearly three thousand people. It is very significant, as showing the development of musical

taste in Glasgow, that ballad concerts, where the programme consists chiefly of operatic excerpts, threadbare ballads, and new Royalty songs, have for some time back been an utter failure in the west end of our city, while on the other hand the concerts of Joachim, Sarasate, Stavenhagen, and orchestral concerts, where music of the highest class is performed, are always well supported by all sections of the community. Herr Stavenhagen's programme consisted principally of examples of the modern Romantic School, Chopin, Schumann, and Liszt, including a long sonata by Liszt, produced for the first time in Scotland. In these works he succeeded in awakening the highest possible enthusiasm of the audience by his magnificent *technique* and the striking individuality and artistic finish of his interpretation of the music. No pianist except Rubinstein has ever so thoroughly aroused the interest of the musical public of Glasgow, or attracted such large audiences. Towards the end of next month we are promised a visit from Dr. Joachim and his Quartet party, and a very general desire has been expressed that Herr Henschel and his accomplished wife should give a vocal recital in Glasgow, but as yet none of our local *entrepreneurs* have taken the hint. Last week Miss Geisler-Schubert, the pianist, Herr M. Sons (violin), and Herr Fuchs (cello) played at a semi-private chamber concert in one of the suburbs.

## PATENTS.

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- 493. An improvement in, or applicable to, the actions of pianofortes, organs, and other lever-keyed instruments.—WM. DRAPER MOON, 85, Newman-street, Oxford-street, London, Jan. 10.
- 601. An improved rack or file, applicable for arranging papers, such as music, newspapers, or similar articles.—ALFRED WATKINS, 3, Poet's-corner, Westminster, Jan. 13.
- 701. Improvements in the mouthpieces of wind musical instruments.—HENRY JOHN DISTIN, 4, South-street, Finsbury, London, Jan. 14.
- 1141. Improvements in pianoforte actions.—JOHN LEGG, 2, Gresham-buildings, Guildhall, Jan. 22.
- 1244. Improved means for locking organ mechanism in variable positions.—HENRY WILLIS and VINCENT WILLIS, 6, Bream's-buildings, Chancery-lane, Jan. 23.
- 1859. Improvements in combined pianos and harmoniums.—JAMES TRAVIS, 64, Barton-arcade, Manchester, Feb. 4.

The artist, it is true, is the son of his age, but pity for him if he is its pupil, or even its favourite!—Schiller.

Man has lost his dignity, but art has saved it, and preserved it for him in expressive marbles. Truth still lives in fiction, and from the copy the original will be restored.—Schiller.

But how is the artist to guard himself from the corruptions of his time, which on every side assail him? By despising its decisions. Let him look upwards to his dignity and the law, not downwards to his happiness and his wants. Free alike from the vain activity that longs to impress its traces on the fleeting instant, and from the querulous spirit of enthusiasm that measures by the scale of perfection the meagre product of reality, let him leave to mere understanding, which is here at home, the province of the actual; while he strives by uniting the possible with the necessary, to produce the ideal.—Schiller.

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